
Class No.....

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SECRET.

IMPERIAL WAR CABINET.

(June 11 to August 2, 1918.)

SUBJECT INDEX TO MINUTES OF MEETINGS.

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President Wilson and Allied intervention in Siberia; prepared to accept the idea of a Relief Commission, escorted by an armed force, mainly American; not yet convinced of the desirability of a purely military and mainly Japanese intervention; telegram from M. Clemenceau to President Wilson urging intervention to rescue the Czechs; to be asked not to commit himself before hearing from Versailles; summary of M. Kerensky's interview with the Prime Minister to be sent to him 21 (10); Supreme War Council invited to appeal to President Wilson to accept the policy recommended in the resolutions to be proposed by the British representatives 22 (1 (3)); resolutions adopted by the Supreme War Council and telegraphed to Allied Ambassadors at Washington for presentation to President Wilson; Lord Reading's interviews with the President 23 (6).

Prime Minister; American co-operation on the Western front; to communicate to M. Clemenceau, or to General Foch direct, a report by C.I.G.S 24 (2).

" " and Dominion administration 26 (8), 27 (8).

" Minister's review of the course of the war since the last meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet in May 1917 15 (4).

" Ministers, Committee of 28 (11), 29 (7).

" " " " man-power, effective and economical application of, to be considered by 22 (3).

" " " " 19 (8); Russian situation; draft resolutions prepared for the Supreme War Council 21 (10); see also W.C. 437 (11); *text of the resolutions*, as approved by Imperial War Cabinet 22 (1); resolutions adopted by the Supreme War Council and telegraphed to Allied Ambassadors at Washington for presentation to President Wilson 23 (6).

" " " " to discuss the questions of future military policy and the allocation of our man-power 24 (6).

Prisoners of war, exchange of; British delegation to Holland; Admiralty not consulted with regard to appointment of naval attaché in place of Captain Kitson 29 (10).

" " " " omission of clause barring the exchange of submarine officers; agreement to be ratified, subject to restoration of the clause 28 (5), 29 (10).

" " " " proportion of officers to n.c.o.'s. and men returned to this country; demand of Dutch Government that all officers and men now in Holland be evacuated to England before a further consignment of prisoners is received from Germany 28 (8).

" " " " release to Germany of children of German parentage 29 (10).

" " " " reservations by the German delegates with respect to the position of Germans in China 27 (7).

" " ill-treatment of our men by the Germans for refusing to do "work connected with the operations of war" 28 (6).

" " in Holland, feeding of; development of industries in which they could be employed; organisation of Red Cross work; women for Y.M.C.A. and V.A.D. work in Holland; leave for prisoners of war 28 (7).

" " treatment of in Germany and Holland; notes of statements and suggestions made by Miss Vulliamy; memorandum by Sir George Cave 28 (7).

" " " " retaliation on German officer prisoners as a means of obtaining proper treatment for our own men; Lord R. Cecil, with Lord Newton and Sir R. Borden, to investigate the subject 28 (7), 29 (10).

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- Russia, Allied intervention; Mr. Hughes points out the difficulty of the situation as shown on the one hand by Mr. Lockhart's message urging immediate intervention, and on the other hand by President Wilson's delays 28 (10).
- " " " omission to invite Indian representatives to attend the War Cabinet on July 22; their concurrence with action then taken 26 (7).
- " " " pledges to the Russian people 22 (1).
- " " " relief expeditions 22 (1).
- " and Finland; only small enemy parties in neighbourhood of Kem; movement in Southern Finland; possible attack on the Murman line, across Lake Ladoga; report of Czech investment of Ekaterinburg; guerilla warfare in the Ukraine; General Mackensen still there 21 (3).
- " Archangel and Murmansk, development of Allied forces at 22 (1).
- " Black Sea Fleet ordered to return from Novorossisk to Odessa, the Germans having promised not to use it against the Allies 17 (9).
- " " " sinking of warships by the Russians at Novorossisk; report so far unconfirmed 21 (7).
- " Caucasus, German and Turkish political rivalry in; race for the possession of Baku 20 (5), 21 (4).
- " " two German battalions reported as moving from Batum to Tiflis 17 (3).
- " collapse of; its influence on the present situation on the Western front; Prime Minister's review of the course of the war 15 (4).
- " conditions in, reviewed by the Foreign Secretary; state of anarchy; the Bolsheviks: necessity for external intervention 19 (6).
- " Czecho-Slovak forces in, Allied intervention for the assistance of 22 (1).
- " German penetration in the Ukraine, Crimea, and the Caucasus; access to the Volga, Turkestan, and Northern Persia 20 (5), 21 (3 and 4).
- " isolation from Western Europe, Allied intervention to prevent 22 (1).
- " Japanese intervention along a new northern line of advance 20 (5).
- " Murman line, possible attack on 21 (3).
- " Murmansk; reports current in Russia that it is held by 20,000 British troops 17 (2).
- " national uprising against German domination in; Allied intervention as a stimulus 22 (1).
- " North; H.M.S. "Attentive" at Kandalaksha, Kem, and Soroka; a force landed at Soroka; restoration of the railway between Soroka and Kem destroyed by the Bolsheviks in their retreat to the south; local support assured 23 (2).
- " re-establishment of M. Kerensky in: his interview with the Prime Minister; no *official* reply to be given to his questions which would commit the British Government to supporting him 21 (11).
- " reorganisation of 20 (5), 22 (1).
- " Siberia, Allied intervention in; *draft resolutions* prepared by the Committee of Prime Ministers for submission to the Supreme War Council 21 (10); further consideration of the draft; *text of the resolutions* as approved by the Imperial War Cabinet; to be proposed by the British Members at the Supreme War Council 22 (1); resolutions adopted by the Supreme War Council and telegraphed to Allied Ambassadors at Washington for presentation to President Wilson; Lord Reading's interviews with the President 23 (6).
- " " " " M. Tardieu's proposal for discussion at the Supreme War Council; active Army to be Japanese; Allied contingents under a High Commissioner to be used on lines of communication and as gendarmerie; Special Commission to deal with commercial matters 21 (10).
- Russia; Siberia, Allied intervention in; position of Japan and America; Japan's policy; attitude of President Wilson; American Committee on Foreign Relations stated by Mr. Hughes to be in favour of joint intervention; message from the Imperial War Cabinet to President Wilson in favour of intervention 19 (7).
- " " Japanese intervention in 21 (10), 22 (1).
- " " supplies from; denial of, to the Germans 22 (1).
- " " the Czecho-Slovaks extending their influence southward towards Turkestan 29 (3).
- " Vladivostock; Czech General gives the causes leading to the delivery of his ultimatum; Conference on board H.M.S. "Suffolk"; disarming of Siberian flotilla; landing of forces from all the Allied ships present, including Americans 23 (3).
- " " stores at 22 (1).
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" " " Supreme War Council decide that the question of tonnage be settled between the American and British Governments 23 (6).

" losses; favourable reports 19 (3).

" " from enemy submarines 25 (2).

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" " of the Armies in France 17 (13).

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" " " South Africa's effort in the war; recruiting of South Africans in the British forces; political conditions in South Africa 17 (13).

" " survey of naval and military policy in 1917-18 17 (13).

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" campaign, comparative failure of the 15 (4).

" (German) off the Massachusetts coast 26 (6).

" menace, measures for dealing with; review of naval situation by First Sea Lord 21 (13).

" officers (prisoners of war); omission of clause in the agreement for exchange of prisoners; agreement to be ratified subject to restoration of the clause 28 (5).

Submarines; efficacy of guns and depth-charges in anti-submarine warfare 17 (4); anti-submarine air patrols 17 (12).

" (enemy), attacks on, by air patrols 21 (8).

" " destruction of 16 (4), 17 (4, 6, and 12), 19 (3), 21 (5), 25 (2).

" " " sinking of one of the U-boats which attacked the "Justicia"; official statement to be published 27 (5).¹

" (German) in Norwegian territorial waters 29 (11); W.C. 460 (11).

" shipping losses from 25 (2).

" " " s.s. "Justicia" 27 (5).

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" " " diplomatic aspect of the Balkan question to be examined; Lord R. Cecil and Lord Derby deputed on behalf of the British Government 23 (6); report by Lord R. Cecil and resolution passed at the Conference at Versailles on July 11, 1918 25 (5).

" " " doubt as to precise wording of a resolution referring the question of operations in 1919 to the military representatives; Secretary to telegraph to British representative to push on with his study of the campaign for 1919 without waiting for that point to be settled 24 (6).

" " " joint note No. 34; recruiting in Abyssinia 29 (9).

" " " policy in the Balkans; orders given by the French War Office contrary to the decision of June 1 23 (6).

" " " probable invitation to Japan to participate in the deliberations in the event of her intervention in Siberia 21 (10).

" " " transport of American troops to France; decision that the question of tonnage be settled between the American and British Governments 23 (6).

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 Tanks for the Americans 22 (3).
 „ Mark V 24 (3).
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 Tonnage for munitions: Mr. Churchill's survey 24 (6).
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 Transport for American troops 23 (6), 29 (1).
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 „ telegram to British representative at, asking him to push on with his study of the campaign for 1919 24 (6).

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 „ Prime Minister's review of the course of the, since the last meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet in May 1917 15 (4).
 „ work, refusal of, by prisoners in German hands 28 (6).
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 „ „ „ „ „ raids on Coblenz, Saarbrucken, Kaiserslautern, and Luxemburg, between July 5 and 8, 1918 23 (5).
 „ „ „ „ „ „ Saarbrucken, Stuttgart, Mannheim, Treves, and Duren; raid on Cologne prevented by clouds 29 (6).
 „ „ „ offensive; strategic striking force at Ouchy 20 (4).
 „ „ „ service on the; reports of Chief of Air Staff on recent air work in France and Italy 17 (11), 18 (2), 19 (4), 20 (4), 21 (8), 23 (5), 24 (5), 25 (3).
 „ „ „ situation; increase in number of German balloons destroyed; our losses of aeroplanes heavier on account of their having to operate farther behind the German lines; raids by the Independent Air Force; statement by prisoners that the Germans contemplated a big scheme of air attack 27 (6).
 „ „ aircraft, Allied and enemy strength and losses 17 (11), 18 (2), 19 (4).
 „ * „ Allied divisions (French, American, and Italian) withdrawn from the immediate fighting area during July 26 (1).

Western front; American co-operation; divisions trained with the British Army fit to hold back lines; divisions in the line and in training with the French Army; total effective combatant strength of American troops in France; the agreement with General Pershing as to furnishing mainly infantry and machine gunners; undue proportion of Americans behind the French line; Prime Minister to communicate a report by C.I.G.S. on these matters either to General Foch direct, or to M. Clemenceau inviting him to support the representations in the report 24 (2).

" " " " French Government authorise M. Tardieu to make arrangements for the next nine months for bringing over American troops, without consulting the British Government; Supreme War Council decide that the question of tonnage be settled between the American and British Governments 23 (6).

" " " divisions replace French divisions of the D.A.N. withdrawn from General Plumer's Army 23 (1).

" " " " seven in the line, five on their way to Alsace, five in training behind the British front 15 (2).

" " " troops; total combatant strength on June 26, 1918 24 (2).

" " Arras-Amiens; air reports do not indicate probability of an attack on that front 19 (1).

" " bombing of twenty towns behind our lines; raid, in retaliation, on German aerodrome 29 (2).

" " (British); indications of a movement against 19 (4); concentration of German batteries and engineer units 23 (1).

" " " divisions (four) originally intended for the right of the French line in Champagne; two detrained on the line Clermont-Senlis and two at Arcis-sur-Aube 25 (1).

" " causes of our military failures 16 (7 and 8), 17 (17), 19 (8).

" " Champagne; the French expect an attack between Rheims and the Argonne 23 (1).

" " Compiègne, Germans within 6 or 7 miles of 15 (1).

" " Doullens sector the most critical from the British point of view 15 (1).

" " enemy movements; air reports indicating increased railway movements on the fronts of 1st and IIInd British Armies, and a decrease on the French front 19 (4).

" " (French); counter-offensive between Soissons and Chateau Thierry 25 (1).

" " General Foch regards the general situation as most satisfactory 26 (1).

" " " " undecided whether to cease operations for two or three days to reorganise, or to continue without reorganisation; General Foch content with result of the operations 27 (1).

" " " Plumer's Army; six French divisions of the D.A.N. replaced by three American divisions 23 (1).

" " German aerodromes at Cambrai and Lille 17 (11).

" " " Crown Prince's Army; statement by D.M.I. that two divisions had been transferred to Prince Rupprecht's IIInd Army 26 (2); W.C. 451 (2).

" " " " reserves 16 (2), 25 (1).

" " " divisions brought from the Eastern front since beginning of March offensive 17 (1).

" " " " engaged 27 (2).

" " " " between Soissons and east of Rheims 26 (2).

" " " (fresh) on the whole front, and in Prince Rupprecht's Army 28 (1).

" " " in the Montdidier-Noyon attack; divisions from Prince Rupprecht's Army 15 (1), 17 (1).

" " " " movement of 16 (2), 17 (1).

" " " forces; movement from north to south 27 (2).

" " " man-power; reported intention to transfer all young and fit men from the East to the Western front 26 (3).

" " " offensive east and west of Rheims; German divisions engaged; C.I.G.S. inclined to think the main attack would be elsewhere; counter-attack by the French between Soissons and Chateau Thierry 25 (1).

" " " " indications of attack at Rheims and in Flanders 24 (1).

- Western front; German reserves; thirty-three entirely fresh divisions in reserve on the whole German line 27 (2).
- „ „ guns (British), numbers of 18 (3).
- „ „ Kemmel; possible German attack 25 (1), 26 (1).
- „ „ Marne; the French cross in several places and secure high ground north of the river 26 (1).
- „ „ Montdidier-Noyon; German divisions; eighteen divisions identified, three or four of which belong to Prince Rupprecht's Army group 16 (2), 17 (1).
- „ „ „ „ „ front of attack extended to about 30 miles by inclusion of salient opposite Noyon; Germans within 6 or 7 miles of Compiègne 15 (1).
- „ „ „ „ „ heavy local fighting, but no big attack; general results unfavourable 16 (2); a comparatively quiet day on June 13 17 (1).
- „ „ moral of French troops 26 (1).
- „ „ Passchendaele, our failure at, and the breaking of the Vth Army front; Mr. Massey considers it essential that the Imperial War Cabinet should clearly understand the causes 16 (8); further discussion proposed by the Prime Minister 17 (17); the whole issue relegated to a Committee of Prime Ministers, with General Smuts, the War Secretary, and C.I.G.S. if required 19 (8).
- „ „ Prince Rupprecht's Army 19 (1), 26 (2).
- „ „ „ „ „ divisions identified in the south 27 (2).
- „ „ „ „ „ number of divisions in line and in reserve; three divisions in the Montdidier-Noyon attack 15 (1); four divisions identified on Montdidier-Noyon sector and one at Villers-Cotterets 17 (1).
- „ „ „ „ „ divisions 28 (1).
- „ „ „ „ „ reserves 16 (2), 17 (1), 20 (1), 21 (1), 25 (1).
- „ „ prisoners (German) captured in the Soissons-Rheims salient 28 (1).
- „ „ report of C.I.G.S., June 20; little change on the French front; unsuccessful attack on Rheims; the impending attack by Prince Rupprecht's Army; his fresh divisions; signs indicating preparations for attack 19 (1), 19 (4).
- „ „ Rheims, position east and west of 26 (1).
- „ „ „ „ „ unsuccessful attack on 19 (1); attack near Rheims repulsed by the Italians 20 (1).
- „ „ situation on the; influence of the collapse of Russia, delay in development of American military resources, exhaustion of our Army by its efforts in 1917, and advantages to the enemy of a single command, on the present situation 15 (4).
- „ „ „ „ „ Prime Minister's opinion that it would continue to be critical for another two months 15 (4).
- „ „ Soissons-Rheims salient; British and American divisions engaged in the counter-offensive 28 (1).
- „ „ Tanks for the American Army 22 (3).
- „ „ „ Mark V 24 (3).
- „ „ the 1917 offensive; General Smuts' survey of naval and military policy 17 (13).
- „ „ unification of the Allied command 17 (13).
- „ „ Villers-Cotterets Forest; Germans reach the western edge and gain ground to the north of the forest 16 (2).
- Work connected with the operations of war, refusal of, by prisoners of war in German hands 28 (6).

Y.

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„ bombing of 16 (5), 17 (5), 20 (3), 21 (6), 26 (5), 29 (5).

„ our failure to expel the enemy from 17 (13).

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 15.

Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, June 11, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present :

The PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bt., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, and of Finance, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	

The following were also present :

General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.	The Hon. A. MEIGHEN, Minister of the Interior, Canada.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.	The Hon. J. A. CALDER, Minister of Immi- gration and Colonisation, Canada.
The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bt., Minister of Shipping.	The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	SIR EDWARD KEMP, K.C.M.G., M.P., Minister of Overseas Military Forces of Canada.
Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.	
Mr. PHILIP KERR.	

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. STORR, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western Front.

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the German front of attack had now been extended from a width of 20 miles to one of about 30 miles, by the inclusion of the salient opposite Noyon, which the French had now abandoned. The Germans were now within 6 or 7 miles of Compiègne; 15 divisions had been identified so far on the front between Montdidier and the Oise, and there might be 20 to 25 divisions engaged in the attack altogether. Of these divisions, 3 came from Prince Rupprecht's army. This left Prince Rupprecht still with 52 divisions in line and 44 in reserve, and, with the excellence of the German railway system, that reserve could be thrown in in almost any direction. The most critical sector, from our point of view, was that in front of Doullens.

American Divisions in France.

2. With regard to the American divisions in France, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that 7 of these were now actually in the line, and 5 more, which had been undergoing training with our *cadres*, were now on their way down to Alsace. A further 5, not yet quite complete, had taken their place for training purposes behind the British front, and we were prepared to train another 4 as well. They were fine, intelligent troops, and would make good soldiers.

Zeebrugge Bombarded.

3. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that two of our monitors had been shelling the entrance to Zeebrugge, at 27,000 yards range. Seven enemy destroyers were observed in the Bruges Canal between Bruges and Zeebrugge.

Review of the Situation.

4. The Prime Minister reviewed the course of the war since the last meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet in May 1917. He indicated the part which the collapse of Russia, the unforeseen delays in the development of America's military resources, the exhaustion of our own army by its efforts in 1917, and the advantages enjoyed by the enemy in the shape of a single command, had contributed towards bringing about the present situation on the Western front, which, in his opinion, would continue critical for another two months. As against this was to be set the comparative failure of the submarine campaign, the British progress in the East, and the increasing evidence of internal breakdown in Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria—all of which, he pointed out, were elements of ultimate success which would increasingly tell in our favour after the immediate crisis had been met.

A short discussion followed with regard to subsequent arrangements, and it was decided to continue the discussion on the Prime Minister's statement on Thursday, the 13th June, which would also enable Sir Robert Borden and the other Dominion Prime Ministers to review the effort of their own Dominions during the past year. It was agreed that the statements on foreign, military, and naval policy should be postponed until the following week, to enable Mr. Hughes and Mr. Cook to be present.

The text of the Prime Minister's statement will be circulated as a separate document.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 11, 1918.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 16.

Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, June 13, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Right Hon. SIR J. G. WARD, Bt., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. A. CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, and Finance , Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH MAHINDAR, Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.
The Right Hon. SIR ERIC GEDDES, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty.	

The following were also present :

Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.	The Hon. A. MEIGHEN, Minister of Interior, Canada.
General Sir H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.	The Right Hon. J. A. CALDER, Minister of Immigration and Colonisation, Canada.
The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bart., Shipping Controller.	The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
Colonel P. R. C. GROVE, D.S.O., Director of Flying Operations (for Minutes 1 to 6).	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B.
	Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Captain CLEMENT JONES, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

Representatives
from India.

1. THE Prime Minister, on behalf of the Cabinet, welcomed the Indian representatives, the Maharaja of Patiala and Sir S. Sinha, who had not been able to attend the first meeting.

The Western
Front.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that there had been heavy fighting locally along the battle-front throughout the preceding day, although no big attack had been made. The French had fought extremely well, and had presumably inflicted heavy punishment on the enemy; but the fighting, on the whole, had gone against us. The Germans had got into the western edge of the Villers-Cotterets Forest, and also gained ground westward, to the north of the Forest. Identifications had been slow in coming in, and only 18 German divisions had so far been identified. Only 3, or possibly 1, of these belonged to Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria's group of armies. It was not quite certain yet whether the German Crown Prince had exhausted all his reserves, and possibly he still had 4 or 5 fresh divisions in hand, as well as such other divisions as could be got by *roulement* along his line. The whole tendency had been to draw reserves from the south and east, and the inference from this was that the great mass of Prince Rupprecht's reserves was still facing the British. According to Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, they were ready to attack within forty-eight hours of the decision of their Command to do so. Of three divisions recently brought up to the northern sector of the front, one had been sent south through Lille, but there was no evidence to show whether that was being sent to help the German Crown Prince, or to replace in Prince Rupprecht's reserve some other division already sent south.

The Italian Front.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Italians now considered that there was no question of the Austrians attacking on the Lower Piave, although General Cavan still thought that an attack down the Brenta line was probable. General Wilson pointed out that the fear of an Austrian attack on the Lower Piave had caused the Italians to abandon the projected offensive on the Asiago Plateau, and to move their heavy guns away from there. It would take some time to bring the guns back if they thought of renewing the offensive.

Submarines.

4. The First Sea Lord reported that a submarine had been attacked, and probably destroyed, by our squadron in the Adriatic. The total destruction of submarines in the last month had been very satisfactory.

Bruges and
Zeebrugge.

5. The First Sea Lord stated that Bruges and Zeebrugge were being steadily bombed.

Sinking of Two
Austrian Dread-
noughts.

6. Admiral Wemyss stated that he had no information, beyond what had appeared in the press, as to the statement that two Austrian dreadnoughts had been sunk by Italian motor craft.

Sir R. Borden's
Statement.

7. Sir R. Borden made a general statement reviewing, in all its aspects, Canada's effort towards the prosecution of the war. At the close of his statement he drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to information which had convinced him that our want of military success had been largely due to lack of foresight and preparation, and to defects in the organisation and leadership of our forces, and urged the imperative necessity of putting aside every consideration in appointments except that of efficiency. He drew attention to

the high degree of organisation which the Canadian forces had been able to attain under officers of whom only a small proportion were professional soldiers, suggesting that if it was true that in the British Army only professional soldiers had any opportunity of rising higher than the rank of Brigadier-General, that was equivalent to a wholesale scrapping of the brains of a nation in its struggle for existence. In this connection he suggested that the Canadian Army might be specially utilised in helping with the training of the American forces, whose problems were identical with those which they had themselves solved.

Mr. Massey's]
Statement.

8. Mr. Massey expressed his appreciation of the frankness which had marked both the Prime Minister's statement on the occasion of the previous meeting, and Sir R. Borden's statement on the present occasion. He considered it was essential that the Imperial War Cabinet should clearly understand the causes of our failure both at Passchendaele last autumn, and on the occasion of the breaking of the front of the Vth Army in March, in order to be able to find the right remedy. He then proceeded to give a general review of the effort made by New Zealand towards the conduct of the War during the last twelve months.

The text of Sir R. Borden's and Mr. Massey's statements will be circulated in a separate document.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 13, 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 17.

Minutes of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, June 14, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH MAHINDAR, Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.
The Right Hon. SIR ERIC GEDDES, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty.	

The following were also present :

General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.	The Hon. A. MEIGHEN, Minister of the Interior, Canada.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.	The Hon. J. A. CALDER, Minister of Immigra- tion and Colonisation, Canada.
The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bart., Minister of Shipping.	The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	Mr. PHILIP KERR.
The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.	
Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.	

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Mr. THOMAS JONES, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western Front.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the previous day had been a comparatively quiet one. The French troops had been fighting well. Five of Prince Rupprecht's divisions had been identified up to date—four on the Noyon-Montdidier sector, and the other one at Villers-Cotterets. One of these was presumably the division which had been reported as passing through Lille a few days before. If these identifications were correct, it left Prince Rupprecht with 96 divisions altogether, i.e., 52 in line and 44 in reserve. 21 of the divisions in reserve, and 22 of those in line, were quite fresh. The remainder had not yet completed their month's rest.

In answer to a question, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that 13 German divisions had been brought over from the Eastern front since the beginning of the March offensive. The present strength of the German infantry varied from 800 to 850 per battalion, and the Germans were apparently trying to work up to the latter standard.

Finland.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that there was a report to the effect that one or one and a half German divisions were on their way through Finland towards Petchenga, on the Murman coast.

The Prime Minister suggested that this was probably the result of reports current in Russia to the effect that Murmansk was being held by 20,000 British troops.

The Caucasus.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that two German battalions had been reported as moving up from Batum to Tiflis.

Submarines.

4. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a seaplane had dropped bombs on a submarine off the Humber on the 13th June, and, observing oil and wreckage coming to the surface, summoned destroyers by wireless, which dropped depth charges, which resulted in more wreckage coming to the surface.

In a subsequent discussion the First Lord stated that the depth charge and the gun were still the most effective weapons against the submarine for surface attack.

Mr. Burton gave the Cabinet his experience of the effects of a depth charge which burst in the neighbourhood of the passenger steamer in which he arrived from South Africa.

Bombing of Ostend and Zeebrugge.

5. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that Ostend docks and Zeebrugge had again been freely bombed on the night of the 12th-13th June.

H.M.S. "Conquest."

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Conquest" had been mined off the Sunk Light Vessel on the previous day, but had managed to get to port; 1½ hours after she was mined a very heavy explosion was heard about 5 miles off, and, as the mine had been laid only that same morning, it was probable that the explosion was due to the German submarine being caught in our own minefield.

H.M.S. "Patia."

7. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Patia" had been torpedoed on the 13th instant, 34 miles from Trevoise Head. The United States destroyer "Trippe" had arrived at Pembroke with 237 officers and men. It was presumed that H.M.S. "Patia" was sunk.

H.M.S. "Centaur."

8. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Centaur" had been mined on the 13th June during a reconnaissance in Heligoland Bight, and was returning at slow speed.

Black Sea Fleet.

9. The Deputy First Sea Lord referred to the Russian wireless message, published that morning, according to which the Russian Black Sea Fleet was ordered to return from Novorossisk to Odessa, the Germans having promised not to use it against the Allies.

Sinking of two
Austrian
Dreadnoughts.

10. With reference to Imperial War Cabinet 16, Minute 6, the Deputy First Sea Lord mentioned that the enemy now admitted the sinking of the "Szent Istvan," the latest of the Austrian dreadnoughts.

Air Work in
France.

11. The Chief of the Air Staff reported that the Air Service had had a good week in France. Sixty enemy aeroplanes had been brought down, and 35 driven down out of control. Altogether, since the battle had started in March, we had destroyed 921 German planes, and brought down 338 out of control. The British Air Service were now helping the French on the Aisne front with a brigade of 10 squadrons (about 200 machines) to bomb the advancing German troops. He understood that very good work was being done. The enemy also were reported to be 186 machines stronger on the Aisne front and generally weaker on the rest of the Western front. Generally speaking, we were superior to the enemy both in numbers and in the quality of our machines. Our own losses on the Western front, compared with the Germans, had been about one-third of the enemy's. The Germans had been constructing additional aerodromes near Cambrai about ten days ago, and were now busy on constructing and making more permanent aerodromes round Lille, presumably, for work over the area between Arras and the sea. The enemy were still doing heavy night bombing over our back areas, and we were making arrangements for machines to go out by night to deal with them. Misty weather had prevented any serious raiding into Germany by our bombing squadrons. The Germans, on their side, had probably been too active on their own front and had had their aerodromes too much interfered with by us to be able to do anything against this country.

In Italy we had brought down thirteen aeroplanes in the last week, and, generally speaking, were able to have more or less our own way with the Austrians. The Italian aviators, though numerous, were not very enterprising.

Anti-Submarine
Air Work.

12. General Sykes reported that there had been an increase of enemy aerial activity over the southern part of the North Sea recently, presumably as an answer to our own anti-submarine air patrols. With regard to the effectiveness of our own aerial anti-submarine patrols, General Sykes informed the Imperial War Cabinet that certainly three and possibly eleven submarines had been directly destroyed by aircraft.

Admiral Hope explained that the value of aircraft lay not so much in the submarines destroyed as in their effectiveness in keeping

submarines below the surface. He mentioned that the traffic between this country and Holland was now escorted by flying-boats and seaplanes.

The First Lord added that we had never yet had any ship torpedoed when escorted by airships or kite-balloons.

South Africa's
Effort:
Review of the
Military Situation.

13. General Smuts gave a brief review of South Africa's effort in the war, drawing attention to the peculiar features of that effort as regards the mainly African character of the operations and as regards the fact that the South African Government had not discouraged South Africans joining the Imperial forces, so that there were probably as many South Africans in the British forces on the Western front as in the South African brigade there. As regards the political difficulties in South Africa, he had been told by Mr. Burton that conditions were improving, on the whole, and that no serious trouble was to be expected.

General Smuts then surveyed the naval and military policy of the previous twelve months, setting forth in detail both the naval and military reasons which had led the Government to give their assent to the 1917 offensive in Flanders. He commented on the reaction of these exhausting operations on the army, but pointed out that the disadvantages to the Navy of our failure to expel the enemy from Ostend and Zeebrugge had been mitigated temporarily, at any rate, by the recent blocking operations at these ports. In regard to the existing military situation, he pointed out that we had now established a single command over the armies in France, and were looking forward to the arrival of the American army. The temper of the British people had improved enormously since the summer of 1917; every blow had only hardened it, and their spirit was one which could not be defeated. The United States, he knew, would show the same spirit, although he could not feel the same absolute certainty about the spirit of France, which had been superb so far. The serious danger which he foresaw was the lack of training of the officers and staffs of the American army, and he trusted that our Imperial General Staff would do all in their power to help the Americans in that respect, as well as in the improvement of the training of our own forces, not only for trench warfare, which was, after all, a passing phase, but for open warfare. To sum up, we had superior resources in every form of war-power; all we needed was improved organisation, training, and leadership. It was to these points that the energy of the Government would have to be directed to the fullest extent, and, if they were secured, he had no doubt that we could win the war.

Newfoundland's
Effort.

14. Mr. Lloyd said that he was circulating a brief statement of the effort made by Newfoundland, an effort which he hoped to be able shortly to double. They had recently passed a Compulsory Service Act on Canadian lines, and some 1,200 volunteers had come in to anticipate conscription.

India's Effort.

15. After Mr. Montagu had referred to the fact that he had circulated a full statement of India's effort (Paper G.T.-4800), Sir S. Sinha briefly reviewed what India had done and was proposing to do in the matter of man-power, material, and finance. With regard to all these matters, he wished to urge the British Government to furnish India with the help required to enable her to put forward the fullest output of her powers. Thus, in respect of her effort in man-power, she wanted liberal assistance in the matter of British Staff and officers, not least, of medical officers.

In the matter of material, she urgently needed more plant and more expert advice.

With regard to finance, assistance from the British Government in the shape of bullion, was urgently needed to prevent a most serious financial crisis.

**Effort of the Crown
Colonies.**

16. The Secretary of State for the Colonies briefly reviewed the effort of the Crown Colonies, both in man-power, combatant and non-combatant, and in other respects. That effort had been a very remarkable one. Nothing, moreover, was more remarkable than the proofs of loyalty and devotion which had been received from the natives of the Crown Colonies in every part of the world. He wished to draw attention also to the position of natives in the occupied German territories, who had rendered great services to our troops, and were exposed to the risk of German reprisals if those territories were handed back to their former masters. Such a result would have a most unfortunate effect upon all the native populations of adjoining colonies.

**Future
Arrangements.**

17 The Prime Minister said that the statements made with regard to the efforts of the Dominions had been highly gratifying. With reference to the momentous discussion, initiated by Sir R. Borden, as to the reasons why the hopes of 1917 had not been realised, it was quite clear to him that when these issues had been raised by representatives of Dominions who had contributed so large a share to the struggle, they could not be left where they were. It was necessary, however, that the views of Australia should also first be heard on these matters. He suggested that, after the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had made his statement on Tuesday next, the present discussion might be continued by Mr. Hughes, who would have the advantage of the full reports of the proceedings, and could also discuss the matter with Sir R. Borden. He himself, or the Secretary of State for War, might by that time be able to make a statement on behalf of the British Government, and they could then confer as to the best method of dealing with the criticisms and suggestions brought forward.

The text of the statements referred to in Minutes 13 to 17 will be circulated in a separate document.

*2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 14, 1918.*

SECRET.

IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 18.

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Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in the Chief of the Imperial General Staff's Room, War Office, London, S.W., on Tuesday June 18, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present.

The PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.

The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.

The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.

The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.

The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.

The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.

The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.

The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.

The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bt., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.

The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.

The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.

The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.

Major - General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar, Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Major-General C. H. HARRINGTON, C.B., D.S.O., Deputy-Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.

Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.

The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bt., Shipping Controller.

The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.

Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.

Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. STORR, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Italian Front.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the situation was fairly satisfactory. The Austrians ought not to have been allowed to get on to the crest of Montello, but he thought it was not improbable that they would be pushed off again. The British troops were holding their own very well on the Asiago Plateau.

Air Work in
France and Italy.

2. The Chief of the Air Staff reported that the preceding day on the French front had been a very good one. We had brought down altogether 36 enemy aeroplanes and 1 kite balloon, and had lost 4 ourselves.

On the Italian front we had brought down 32 enemy aeroplanes since the Austrian attack started. Both in France and in Italy our aeroplanes had also done very effective work against ground targets.

Review of the
Military Situation.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff then gave a general survey of the whole strategy of the war. After briefly reviewing the situation in the different theatres, he gave figures showing the relative strength of the Allied and enemy forces, in divisions, at different periods during the war, indicating that the German army had exactly doubled its strength in four years of war, while the British army had increased its strength from 6 to 80 divisions. Our officers had increased from 13,820, in August 1914, to 220,770 at the present date. 32,000 officers had been killed. We had formed 192 military schools for training, and at this moment 65,000 officers and non-commissioned officers were undergoing courses of training at these schools. We began the war with 486 guns, and at this moment we have 8,271 in France alone. General Wilson then proceeded to review the main objectives of German strategy in 1914 and at subsequent stages of the war, and indicated his conception of the strategy which should be followed by the Allies in the future.

Owing to its secrecy, the text of General Wilson's statement will not be circulated, but a copy is on record in the personal custody of the Secretary of the War Cabinet, and can be read at the War Cabinet Offices on application to the Secretary.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 18, 1918.

SECRET

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 19.

Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, June 20, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the the Navy, Australia.
	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar, Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
General Sir H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.	The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bart., Shipping Controller.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B.
	Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Captain CLEMENT JONES, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western Front.

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that there had been very little actual change on the French front, apart from an unsuccessful attack by three divisions on Rheims, the object of which he had not been able to understand. As regards the impending big attack, Prince Rupprecht now had 49 fresh divisions, of which 26 were in line. The big machine-gun school at Tongres, near Liège, had just been emptied, and precedents would suggest that this implied that the attack might begin in a week's time. The air report of the 18th June showed a great deal of train movement round Cambrai, but otherwise he gathered that the air reports did not consider that there would be an attack on the Arras-Amiens front.

The Italian Front.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that 34 out of 58 Austrian infantry divisions, and 4 out of 6 cavalry divisions, had already been identified in the fighting in Italy. Many of the bridges over the Piave had been broken by floods, and the situation was, on the whole, very satisfactory. The Italians had plenty of troops, and ought to be able to throw the Austrians back into the river, if they properly co-ordinated their effort.

The Imperial War Cabinet authorised—

The Prime Minister to send, on its behalf, a message of congratulation to the Italian Government on the successful resistance of the Italian army.

Submarines.

3. The First Sea Lord reported that one of our aeroplanes had dropped bombs on a submarine, causing oil and wreckage to come to the surface. Whether the submarine was actually destroyed was uncertain. Admiral Wemyss added that the figures of shipping losses had been good during the last few days, and that the month, as a whole, had been a good one.

The Prime Minister pointed out that this was a pleasing contrast to the state of affairs which used to be reported to the Imperial War Cabinet at its meetings the year before.

The Air Situation

4. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff reported that, on the French front, during the 18th and 19th June, we had destroyed 25 enemy machines, and driven another 9 down out of control. We, on our side, had 9 missing. In Italy we had brought down 18 machines on the 18th, at the cost of 1 missing. There had also been a good deal of shooting at ground targets, and of day bombing. Night bombing had been made difficult in France by bad weather. As to enemy movements the air reports, as far as the weather enabled conclusions to be drawn, showed a great deal of rail movement on the fronts of the 1st and IIIrd British Armies, and a decrease on the French front. The indications, so far as they went, pointed towards a movement against the British front, more particularly that of the IIIrd Army.

Bombing of Belgian Towns.

5. Lord Curzon drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to a letter which he had received from the Queen of the Belgians on behalf of herself and King Albert, dealing with the injuries inflicted on the unhappy Belgian population by our air attacks on the enemy. In one case 125 Belgians were reported to have been killed in a factory at Liège. The spirit of the people, already badly shaken, was being shattered by our attacks.

The Prime Minister quoted a similar letter from the King of the Belgians to His Majesty the King, laying stress on the suffering

caused, and on the deep and legitimate emotion which the knowledge of these things created in the Belgian army. He had himself frequently protested, and placed the matter with confidence in His Majesty's hands.

In the discussion which followed, it was suggested that the bombing of German towns and factories produced a much greater moral effect upon Germany than similar action in Belgium. Against this, however, it was urged that the Belgian factories utilised by the Germans for military purposes were much nearer, and also that Belgium was swarming with German troops, whose *moral* was undoubtedly, judging by our own experience, affected by continuous bombing.

The Chief of the Royal Air Staff undertook to look into the whole question, with a view to the possibility of issuing instructions to our airmen, which, without conveying any suggestion of criticism of their efforts, should lay stress on the desirability of sparing the Belgian civil population as much as possible

Survey of the Foreign Situation.

6. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs surveyed the foreign situation generally, taking in review, first of all, the conditions in the various Allied countries; then, in certain neutral countries; and, lastly, in Russia. He dwelt upon the complete anarchy into which Russia had fallen, and the incompetence and almost complete paralysis of every class and party. The Bolsheviks alone, who were mainly Jews, and were without all statesmanship and knowledge of affairs, had at least shown a certain amount of decision. Their power was waning, but all observers of the Russian situation, however much they disagreed in their views, were united in their conviction that without external intervention Russia could do nothing.

Allied Intervention in Siberia.

7. The discussion which followed the Secretary of State's survey turned mainly on the question of Allied intervention, more particularly with regard to the position of Japan and the United States of America in the matter.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that Japan would, in the last resort, always intervene in Eastern Siberia for the protection of purely Japanese interests, if she thought those interests were affected by a German advance. She was not prepared, on the other hand, to carry out an Allied policy for the purpose of reconstituting an Eastern front against Germany and saving as much of Russia as possible, unless she could secure the material and financial support which the United States could give. President Wilson's avowed objections hitherto had been, firstly, the fear that there might be a violent reaction in Russia against an intervention mainly carried out by troops of an Asiatic Power, and that this might drive Russia into Germany's arms; and, secondly, the absence of sufficiently convincing military arguments that anything that could be done from Vladivostok could really affect the military situation sufficiently to prevent Germany withdrawing such troops as she otherwise would have withdrawn from Russia. He believed himself that these avowed arguments were the arguments which really weighed with the President, although there were many people who considered that Japanese unpopularity in the Western States, more particularly in California (whose vote was of considerable importance to the President), also exercised not a small influence on his judgment.

Mr. Hughes informed the Imperial War Cabinet that he had discussed the matter with members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, appointed by President Wilson, and had found them distinctly in favour of intervention, provided the operation was a

joint one and not conducted by Japan alone. He wished to be sure that we had really pressed the United States Government sufficiently in the matter

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the Foreign Office had been pressing the American Government for months. So far the President's attitude had been definitely against intervention, although he would not like to say that the door was shut. He did not consider that it would be possible for the British Government to give the Japanese assurances in regard to munitions and finance which would enable them to go ahead without American support. Such action would only make a division in Allied policy evident, which would certainly be played upon in Russia and accentuate hostility to the Japanese. He informed the Imperial War Cabinet that the proposition he had placed before the Japanese Ambassador immediately after the last meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles had not yet been answered.

The Imperial War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to make a further attempt to influence President Wilson by sending him a direct message from the Imperial War Cabinet to say that it had considered the matter and was in favour of intervention.

Conduct of Military Operations.

8. Mr. Hughes said that, although the Imperial War Cabinet had had admirable reviews of the military and foreign situations placed before them by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, it was futile for them to express an opinion on the war situation generally without much fuller information as to what had actually happened and as to the reasons which had led up to the strategy which had expressed itself in the previous year's operations with very heavy casualties. Australia had poured out its men into the machine and had had heavy losses, but had never had a scratch of a pen to explain what had really happened. He wished to feel sure that the sacrifices that were being made were not wasted for want of proper leadership and strategy. We were now in the same position as, or even possibly in a worse position than, before the battle of the Marne. If there had been blunders, it was necessary now, even at the eleventh hour, to repair them. He suggested that a comprehensive memorandum should be prepared, reviewing the whole situation.

The Prime Minister said that the points raised by Mr. Hughes were in effect a continuation of the discussion initiated by Sir Robert Borden (Imperial War Cabinet 16, Minute 7). He suggested that the whole issue should be relegated for preliminary discussion to a Committee consisting of the Prime Ministers, including General Smuts, as General Botha's representative, and the Secretary of State for War, with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff if his presence was required, and that this Committee should meet without delay. Any conclusions which the Committee might come to should then come back to the Imperial War Cabinet for discussion.

This suggestion was generally agreed to, and it was decided that—

The Committee should meet at 12 o'clock on the following day.

The text of Mr. Balfour's statement will be circulated in a separate document.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 20, 1918.

SECRET

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 20.

Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, June 25, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.	The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. SIR W. WEIR, Secretary of State for the Air Force.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
Major-General SIR G. M. W. MACDONOGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.	The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bart., Shipping Controller.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. STORR, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western Front.

1. THE Director of Military Intelligence reported that, except for the repulse of an enemy attack by the Italians near Rheims, there had been no military events of importance on the Western front. Prince Rupprecht now had 28 fresh divisions in reserve, and 32 available for *roulement*.

The Italian Front.

2. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that, except for a little ground which the Austrians still retained on the Brenta sector, they had everywhere retired to their former positions, and were apparently also withdrawing, on the extreme left of their line, in the area between the old and the new Piave. In the Brenta sector the Italians had made an effort to recapture Mont Asolone, and had temporarily occupied the summit, but had been pushed back. The Italian cavalry and infantry patrols which had crossed the Piave had met with heavy fire, and had not returned. Lord Cavan had reported that the total British casualties in the recent fighting had been 117 officers and 1,600 other ranks. The enemy's casualties had been very high, including about 1 000 prisoners. Altogether the Allies had taken something like 16,000 Austrian prisoners.

Air Attacks on
Cattaro and
Zeebrugge.

3. The First Sea Lord reported that the Air Forces attached to the Navy had made an attack on Cattaro, and had been carrying out the usual attacks on Zeebrugge.

The Air Situation.

4. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff reported that there had been a great deal of reconnaissance work done between the 20th and 23rd June in France. The indications as to the enemy's intentions, as far as they went, pointed to special activity in the area Forêt de Nieppe-Ypres. The weather had been unfavourable for night observation. There had not been much air fighting, as the enemy had not been pushing his machines much over our line, possibly owing to the weather, but there had been a good deal of shooting at ground targets.

In Italy, during the same period, four enemy machines had been brought down, without any loss on our side, and there had been a great deal of shooting at ground targets.

The Strategic Striking Force at Ouchy, which had been unable to conduct operations between the 13th and the 22nd owing to the weather, had launched a series of four attacks on Metz-Sablons station on the evening of the 23rd, dropping six tons of bombs, and had effectively bombed Saarbrücken, Dillingen, and Metz-Sablons on the 24th. Enemy machines had gone up to attack them, and two of these had been brought down, without casualties to ourselves.

Sir William Weir drew attention to the increasing importance of photographic observation as compared with personal observation.

The Middle East:
Review by Lord
Curzon.

5. Lord Curzon, as Chairman of the Eastern Committee, reviewed the whole situation in the Middle East. He indicated that German ambitions, which had received an immense impetus since the collapse of Russia and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, lay along two main lines of advance: a northern line through the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian and Turkestan, to the borders of Chinese Turkestan; and the southern through Palestine, Mesopotamia, and through Persia and Afghanistan against India. The whole of the area between these lines was a theatre of actual or probable warfare. Germany's intentions as regards the southern line had been maturing for some twenty-five years, and had specially centred round the construction of the Baghdad Railway. Her hand with

regard to Persia and Afghanistan had first been shown in the armistice preceding the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, and in the treaty itself, both of which contained clauses directly challenging the British position in the East and holding out a feeler for Persian and Afghan co-operation. Since then, the successive stages of the German advance had been the peace with Roumania, the occupation of the Ukraine, the occupation of Odessa and the Crimea, together with the seizure of the Russian Black Sea fleet, and now the invasion of the Caucasus. With regard to this invasion, Lord Curzon drew special attention both to the enormous economic potentialities of the Caucasus and to the political rivalry in this region between Germans and Turks, both of whom were at this moment engaged in a race for Baku. The capture of Baku would give the Germans access, if they could secure the Caspian fleet, to the Volga, to Turkestan, and to Northern Persia.

British action had in the past been mainly confined to meeting the enemy's advance on the southern line. After beating off two attacks on Egypt, we had advanced into Palestine, where we now enjoyed the active co-operation of the Arab movement, a matter of the first importance not only from its immediate military aspect, but also with a view to the ultimate settlement of Mesopotamia and of all the area occupied by the Arab race, where the Turks had hitherto maintained an alien domination, to which he trusted no territory, once liberated, would be restored. In Mesopotamia, as in Palestine, our advance had not been a mere roving adventure, but had been dictated by imperative strategic considerations. We were now compelled to extend our sphere of operations to Persia where the object of our various measures was to keep Persia out of the war and to maintain a friendly Government.

After touching on the situation in Afghanistan, and laying stress upon the position of India both as the core and centre of British power in the East and as the objective of German's advance, Lord Curzon laid before the Imperial War Cabinet the following conclusions from his survey:—

- (a.) The necessity of rebuilding a Russia from whatever elements were available.
- (b.) The impossibility, from the strategic point of view, of allowing the enemy to recover Palestine and Mesopotamia—the two channels by which he could press forward to Egypt and the Persian Gulf.
- (c.) The necessity of securing a friendly Persia, a loyal Afghanistan, and, above all, a powerful, loyal, and contented India.
- (d.) The immediate urgency of Japanese intervention in the Far East, along a new northern line of advance, by which the Germans could be forestalled and our own efforts further south materially assisted.

A short discussion followed on the subject of Japanese intervention, with regard to which there was general agreement with the conclusions laid down by Lord Curzon. In view, however, of the fact that several important telegrams and reports of interviews had not yet been circulated to members of the Imperial War Cabinet, it was decided—

To postpone the discussion to the next meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet on Thursday next, the 27th June, at which definite instructions could be given to the delegates who will take part at the forthcoming meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles. In the meantime it was arranged that the Committee of Prime Ministers should further investigate the question on the following day.

The Imperial War Cabinet further decided that—

The Air statement, and, if possible, the Admiralty statement, should be made at 3.15 P.M. on Friday next, the 28th June. In view, however, of the possibility of further developments with regard to intervention in Russia, it might be found more advantageous to have the statement on Thursday, the 27th June, and postpone the discussion on intervention to Friday, the 28th June.

The text of Lord Curzon's statement will be circulated in a separate document.

2, *Whitehall Gardens, S.W.*,
June 25, 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 21.

Minutes of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London, at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, June 27, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

The PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.

The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.

The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India (for Minutes 10 to 15).

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.

The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.

The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.

The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia (for Minutes 10 to 15).

The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.

The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.

The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.

The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.

The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.

Major - General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

Admiral Sir R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 13 to 15).

Rear-Admiral Sir W. R. HALL, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Intelligence Division, Admiralty.

Major-General G. M. W. MACDONOGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.

Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.

The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 10 to 15).

Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B.

Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Captain CLEMENT JONES, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western Front.

1. THE Director of Military Intelligence reported that the total number of fresh divisions in reserve under Prince Rupprecht now stood at 33.

The Italian Front.

2. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that the Italians had made an attack with light forces on Mount Asolone on the afternoon of the 25th instant, but had stopped when they met with strong resistance. On the Piave front the Italians had abandoned the attempt to make a bridgehead at Ponte di Piave and had withdrawn their patrols. Some fighting was still going on in the area between the old and the new Piave.

Russia and Finland.

3. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that General Poole now reported that there were only quite small enemy parties in the neighbourhood of Kem. On the other hand, there was a good deal of movement in Southern Finland, which indicated a possible intention of an attack across Lake Ladoga towards the Zvanka-Petrozavodsk section of the Murman line. According to a French report, the Czechs were investing Ekaterinburg. This might possibly account for the reported murder of the Czar. The Director of Military Intelligence added that his information was that General Mackensen was still in the Ukraine, where the Germans had a good deal of guerilla warfare to contend with.

Persia and the Caucasus.

4. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that he had received a telegram from General Marshall to the effect that General Dunsterville was going to meet General Bicharakoff at Fuzeli on the 26th instant, which indicated that the latter had not, by that date, gone back to Baku. Near Baku the Bolshevik garrison had, on the 26th June, defeated the Tartars west of Kurdamir, 80 miles west of Baku, and taken three guns. They were busy making entrenchments round Baku. The Director of Military Intelligence added that the difficulties between Turks and Germans in the Caucasus had not been settled, but that General von Kress, the German Commissioner, had probably now arrived in the Caucasus. The Germans were transporting manganese from Batum to Braila.

Submarines.

5. The Director of the Intelligence Division, Admiralty, reported that the German mine-laying submarine "U.C. 11," which had been laying mines off the coast for two years past, was sunk by explosion on the morning of the 26th June, east of Harwich. There was one survivor, the captain. The submarine attacked and reported sunk by an armed trawler on the previous day (War Cabinet 436, Minute 12) was now reported as probably only slightly damaged.

Bombing Raids.

6. The Director of the Intelligence Division, Admiralty, reported that there had been no night flying possible, owing to bad weather, but bombs had been dropped by day on Bruges docks, Ostend docks, and Zeebrugge.

The Russian Black Sea Fleet.

7. The Director of the Intelligence Division, Admiralty, stated that the report that a Russian dreadnought and five destroyers had been sunk at Novorossisk was so far unconfirmed.

The Air Situation.

8. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff reported that reconnaissances had given no further indications as to the whereabouts of the impending German attack on the Western front. Sixteen tons of

bombs had been dropped on the preceding night on Tournai and Cambrai railway stations. Six submarines had been sighted and attacked by our air patrols from the east coast.

Reception of American Troops.

9. The Prime Minister drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to communications he had received from the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, and from Mr. Ben Tillett, M.P., with regard to the reception of American troops in Liverpool. Mr. Tillett stated that the American fighting men were astounded at the cold reception they met with, and that there was much dissatisfaction.

Sir Robert Borden, Mr. Massey, and Mr. Lloyd stated that their experience was that the American troops met with a tremendous reception coming up the river from other ships and from crowds on the bank.

It was pointed out that the real difficulty was that the naval and military authorities did not feel themselves justified in giving sufficient notice ahead of the arrival of the transports to enable a civic reception to take place. It was stated, on the other hand, that no long notice was really required for an informal reception by the Mayor and as many of his Councillors as might be available, and it was urged that an effort should be made to arrange that sufficient notice should be given for this purpose. It was suggested at the same time that the Minister for Information should take steps to have it made clear in the United States press why notice of the arrival of American troops could not be given in time for a formal welcome.

The Secretary of State for War undertook to look into the matter with reference to the amount of notice which the military landing authorities could give to the municipal authorities.

The Secretary was instructed to communicate to the Minister of Information the suggestion that the difficulties of the matter should be made clear to the American press.

Allied Intervention in Siberia.

10. The Imperial War Cabinet discussed draft resolutions, prepared by the Committee of Prime Ministers with a view to their submission to the Supreme War Council at its forthcoming meeting at Versailles, on the subject of Allied intervention in Siberia.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs read to the Imperial War Cabinet a telegram just received from Lord Reading, who had seen President Wilson on the subject, to the effect that the President would only agree to intervention in the guise of a Relief Commission. He was, however, now prepared to accept the idea that the Relief Commission should be escorted by an armed guard, which he considered should be mainly American, supplemented by Japanese and other Allied troops. He was not yet convinced of the desirability of a purely military and mainly Japanese intervention. Mr. Balfour also read to the Imperial War Cabinet another telegram, which had just been received from Lord Derby, to the effect that, in addition to the telegram already sent by General Foch to President Wilson, M. Clemenceau had now telegraphed to President Wilson urging immediate intervention, on the grounds of the duty of the Allies to rescue the Czechs and laying stress on the fact that only three months remained before the beginning of winter. M. Clemenceau had, in fact, completely altered his position in the last twenty-four hours, and was now in agreement with the policy of using the Czechs as the vanguard of the Allied force in Russia. Lord Derby had also been informed by M. Pichon that our consul at Vladivostock was arming the Czechs there for self-defence. The telegram further contained information that M. Tardieu was putting forward a proposal for discussion at the Supreme War Council, based on the idea that the active army of intervention should be Japanese and com-

manded by a Japanese General, that the Allied contingents should be under a High Commissioner, to be decided upon among the Governments, and be used for lines of communications and gendarmerie purposes, and that there should be a special Commission to deal with commercial matters.

The Imperial War Cabinet discussed both these telegrams in their bearing upon the proposed resolutions. The general view taken was that, while there was nothing inconsistent with the resolutions in the idea of a Relief Commission, and that this might be the easiest way of getting President Wilson further committed, the President's proposal as it stood was inadequate, and that there could be no question of whittling down the policy decided on as a matter of urgency, simply to please the President. With regard to M. Tardieu's proposals, it was felt that, while they were hardly practicable as they stood, it might be possible to harmonise them both with an effective policy of intervention and with President Wilson's idea of a Relief Commission.

The Prime Minister summed up by pointing out that there were, in substance, two quite different proposals: the one suggested that intervention should take place under American command, in the shape of a small and ineffective force, and after a long period of delay involved by the lack of American shipping on the Pacific; and the other, early intervention by a well-equipped powerful force, capable of making its way through to the Urals. This, for practical reasons, would have to be predominantly a Japanese force. He considered it essential that we should express our view quite definitely and distinctly to President Wilson, in favour of the second of these alternatives. He considered that an additional paragraph might very well be added to the draft resolutions, advocating the sending of a relief expedition under American command, but he thought it of great importance that the President should not commit himself in public in favour of his present idea, before he heard the considered views of the Supreme War Council.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook to telegraph to Lord Reading to ask President Wilson not to commit himself on this matter before hearing from Versailles. He also undertook to see that a summary of M. Kerensky's interview with the Prime Minister should be sent to President Wilson, if that had not already been done.

It was also urged that it was necessary not to forget the Japanese point of view in this whole matter. The proposition as put to them so far was not a very attractive one, which naturally made them all the more anxious to be certain of the complete and cordial support of the United States, upon which they depended for material and financial assistance in carrying through the expedition. It was suggested that Japan was looking not merely for territorial reward, but also for more definite recognition of her status as an Ally.

The Prime Minister mentioned, in this connection, that he had already suggested to the Japanese Ambassador that, in the event of Japanese intervention in Siberia, Japan would, no doubt, be invited to participate in the deliberations of the Supreme War Council at Versailles.

Further discussion took place with regard to the resolutions, more particularly from the point of view of simplifying the paragraph referring to the geographical necessity of intervention being mainly Japanese, and from that of making the request from the Supreme War Council to President Wilson in a form which would definitely put him in the position of having either to accept or refuse the recommendations.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

The draft resolutions should be further amended and reconsidered at the next meeting on the afternoon of Friday, the 28th June.

Answer to
M. Kerensky.

11. The Prime Minister raised the point whether he ought not to give a definite answer to the questions which had been put to him by M. Kerensky in their recent interview.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Lord Robert Cecil both laid stress on the importance of giving no official answer to M. Kerensky in a form which would commit the British Government to attempt to re-establish M. Kerensky, or to being regarded in Russia as specially tied to him. There was, however, no reason why an unofficial answer should not be given to M. Kerensky, making clear the intentions of the British Government.

Pacifist Literature.

12. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to the circulation of a mischievous pamphlet issued by the Union of Democratic Control, entitled "Peace Overtures and their Rejection."

Mr. Walter Long, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, undertook to make arrangements for stopping the circulation of the pamphlet in question.

Review of the
Naval Situation.

13. The First Sea Lord gave a general review of the naval situation, both with regard to the position of the surface fleets in the North Sea and the Mediterranean, and with regard to the measures for dealing with the submarine menace. In the latter connection he drew attention to the extensive use made of scientific assistance in every direction, and to the progressive destruction and harassing of the submarines, who were gradually being changed from the hunters into the hunted.

The German
Colonies.

14. In the course of his review, the First Sea Lord drew special attention to the naval problems involved in the question of the retention or return of the German colonies. The chief developments of the present war had been in the direction of submarines and aircraft, for both of which bases could be much more easily and quickly created than for other craft. In this respect any danger that the German colonies presented to our maritime position before the war would be greatly increased after the war if they were returned.

Future Naval
Co-ordination.

15. The First Sea Lord also drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to the Admiralty memorandum on the Naval Defence of the British Empire (Paper G.T.-1571). He said that the Admiralty had approached the subject with some trepidation in so far as it touched upon political ground. While fully realising the need of decentralisation of administration, as executive officers they were strongly impressed by the ideal of a single Navy and unity of command. The importance of co-ordination and unity of command had been one of the chief lessons of the present war, and was true in the naval as well as in the military sphere. In dealing with this matter the Admiralty had attempted to approach it from the wider point of view of the partnership of the nations of the Empire, and had to a certain extent taken the constitution of the Imperial War Cabinet as their guide. In any case, they had not put forward their views in any spirit of dogmatism, or with the idea of expecting a definite answer at once, but with the hope of getting their views considered, and bringing about as soon as possible an agreement on general principles which could afterwards be elaborated into a working system. The points on which he wished more particularly to enlarge were, in the first place, the need of central control in peace. Naval peace arrangements, owing to the far greater mobility of naval warfare, had necessarily to be in much closer accordance

with war plans than military peace arrangements. If each part of the Empire developed a separate naval strategy in peace, it would be impossible to secure effective co-operation in war. If our naval arrangements had not been completely ready in July 1914, the fortunes of the war might have been very different. Unity of naval strategy could only be secured by a central authority. The same applied with regard to the need for uniformity of training. He instanced a report from Vice-Admiral Sims, who pointed out that the American ships, although in all respects efficient when they came to join the British naval forces, were no real addition of strength—possibly the reverse—until they had learned to adopt the same methods and work on precisely the same system as the British ships. The Admiralty considered that, from this point of view, the ships of the Empire Navy should be available in any waters, and the officers of that Navy available to serve in any ship. Similarly, it was desirable to have uniformity of material, especially from the point of view of prompt replenishment of reserves, and, above all, unity of thought and idea, and the maintenance intact of the great traditions on which the Navy had been built up. He again emphasised that the need for unity in these respects did not in the least apply to questions of administration.

The Prime Minister suggested that this very important question of naval co-ordination should be considered direct between the Admiralty and the Dominion Prime Ministers, and, if general questions of principle arose, the matter might be brought back to the Imperial War Cabinet for discussion.

Sir Robert Borden stated that he had no objection to a general discussion of this subject between the Dominion representatives and the Admiralty, although there might be some matters of detail that Canada would wish to discuss with the Admiralty separately.

It was generally agreed that, although action in this matter could not be taken until after the war, it would be of great use to the Admiralty, and advance matters, if a preliminary discussion could take place while the Dominion representatives were in this country, either at the Imperial War Conference or at the Admiralty.

Owing to its secrecy, the text of Admiral Wemyss' statement will not be circulated, but a copy is on record in the personal custody of the Secretary of the War Cabinet, and can be read at the War Cabinet Offices on application to the Secretary.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 27, 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 22.

Minutes of the Twenty-second Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, June 28, 1918, at 3 P.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN,
M.P.

The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P.,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary
of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for
War.

The Right Hon. SIR W. WEIR, Secretary
of State for the Air Force.

The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN,
G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of
Canada.

The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the
Privy Council, Canada.

The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime
Minister of Australia.

The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the
the Navy, Australia.

The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime
Minister of New Zealand.

The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart.,
K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New
Zealand.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C.
SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence,
Union of South Africa.

The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of
Railways and Harbours, Union of South
Africa.

The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime
Minister of Newfoundland.

The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the
Executive Council of the Governor of
Bengal.

The following were also present :

Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B.,
C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and
Chief of the Naval Staff.

Major-General P. P. DE B. RADCLIFFE,
C.B., D.S.O., Director of Military
Operations.

Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief
of the Air Staff.

The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL,
K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for
Minute 1).

The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P.,
Minister of Munitions.

Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B.

MR. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Captain L. BURGIS, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

Allied Intervention in Siberia.

1. THE Imperial War Cabinet considered the draft of the proposed resolutions for submission to the Supreme War Council (see Imperial War Cabinet 21, Minute 10). Certain further minor amendments were discussed and agreed to.

Mr. Hughes informed the Imperial War Cabinet that M. Kerensky had said to him on the previous evening that if the Allied force intervening in Russia were actually under Japanese Supreme Command, that would have a fatal psychological effect. The actual Command might no doubt be in Japanese hands, but that the Generalissimo of the American-British force should be one of the other Allies.

Lord Milner added that, at a later stage in the evening, he had induced M. Kerensky to admit that, if the Japanese formed the great majority of the force, it would not be possible to refuse the Chief Command to them, and that this might be acceptable to Russia if the whole force were in some sense under an Allied political mission.

The Imperial War Cabinet approved the resolutions in the following form :—

(1). The British Imperial War Cabinet, comprising the Prime Ministers and other representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland, and representatives of India and the Crown Colonies, having carefully considered the military situation and prospects of the Allies in all theatres of war, have come to the conclusion that immediate Allied armed assistance to Russia is imperatively necessary for the following reasons :—

- (a.) To assist the Russian nation to throw off their German oppressors and to prevent the unlimited military and economic exploitation of Russia by Germany in her own interests ;
- (b.) For the decisive military reason given by General Foch in his telegram to President Wilson, *i.e.*, that the Germans have already called back from Russia a number of divisions and sent them to the Western front. Allied intervention will be the first step in stimulating a national uprising in Russia against German domination, which will have an immediate effect in renewing German anxiety in regard to the East, and compelling her to refrain from removing further troops westward, and perhaps to move troops back to the East ;
- (c.) To shorten the war. They are advised that, unless the Russian front is reconstituted, there is no reasonable probability of such a superiority over the enemy being concentrated by the Allies as will ensure victory on the Western front in 1919 ;
- (d.) To prevent the isolation of Russia from Western Europe. They are advised that, if action is not taken in Siberia, the existing Allied forces in Northern Russia may have to be withdrawn, and Russia will be completely cut off from the Allies ;
- (e.) To deny to Germany the supplies of Western Siberia and the important military stores at Vladivostock, and to render these available for the Russian population ;
- (f.) To bring assistance to the Czecho-Slovak forces, which have made great sacrifices to the cause for which we are fighting.

(2.) The Imperial War Cabinet are of opinion that the intervention should be Allied in character, should be accom-

panied by pledges to the Russian people, as agreed to at the last Versailles Conference, and should include the following:—

- (i.) An Allied force to operate in Siberia. Circumstances render imperative that the force shall be considerable in number, military in character, and Allied in composition, and that, above all things, it should operate immediately. Delay would be fatal. It is recognised that, owing to geographical and shipping conditions, Japanese troops will comprise the larger portion of the force, but its Allied character must be maintained, and it must include American and Allied units. The force should be under a single Command, appointed by the Power that provides the largest number of troops;
- (ii.) Such developments of the Allied forces in Murmansk and Archangel as the military advisers of the Allies may recommend;
- (iii.) Relief expeditions under American direction and control, to supply the wants and alleviate the sufferings of the Russian peoples.

The primary object of Allied action being to co-operate with the Russian nation in recreating the Eastern front, as a first step towards freeing Russia, the closest co-ordination must exist between the above forces and the Russian armies.

(3.) In view of—

- (i.) The unanimous opinion of General Foch and the Allied military advisers of the Supreme War Council that the immediate despatch of a considerable Allied force to Siberia is essential for the victory of the Allied armies;
- (ii.) The facts that no adequate expedition can be sent without Japanese co-operation and that Japan will not undertake effective action without the encouragement and support of the United States Government; and
- (iii.) The shortness of the time available before the winter for initiating active operations in Siberia, and the rapid German penetration into Russia,

The Imperial War Cabinet invite the Supreme War Council to appeal to President Wilson to accept the policy here recommended, and thus to enable it to be carried into effect before it is too late.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

The British members of the Supreme War Council should propose these resolutions for acceptance by the Supreme War Council.

Air Strategy :
Review by the
Chief of the Royal
Air Staff.

2. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff gave a comprehensive review of our air strategy. After explaining the expansion of the air forces attached to the Army and Navy, he drew attention to the strategic importance of a direct air offensive aimed at the enemy's sources of munitions supply and submarine equipment, and at the dislocation of his industrial organisation generally. He pointed out that, in this respect, the enemy's centres of production were, fortunately, concentrated in certain compact and accessible areas, whereas our munition industries were much more widely scattered, and, therefore, less of a target to enemy raids. The extent of the strain that was being imposed upon the enemy in attempting to defend himself against such a strategic offensive was indicated

by the man-power and material we had ourselves been obliged, by a few raids, to lock up in anti-aircraft home defence. To enable the air striking force, capable of conducting such an offensive, to be created, it was necessary, in the first instance, to maintain our existing air superiority on the Army fronts and with the Navy, and then, by increase of output and the utmost economy in the use of the present establishment, to create the surplus required for the striking force. To do this effectively required a careful estimate and allocation of machines and *personnel* to the different functions. That allocation naturally rested with the Air Ministry, and the need for it was, in fact, one of the main justifications for the creation of a Ministry. Looking back upon the course of the war, he suggested that it had been largely one of battering-ram tactics on both sides. The immense national productive effort on both sides had all flowed into that effort, whose main aim seemed to be attrition. This was true of the air effort as well, in so far as it was treated as auxiliary to the armies in the field. In spite of the immense increase in the number of machines, and the greater diversification of their functions, he considered that the air effort hitherto had not increased in a greater ratio of effect than at the very beginning of the war. He suggested that, consistently with maintaining that ratio, a new strategic factor, that of strategic interception, striking directly at the enemy's sources of productive strength far behind the zone of his armies, might produce a profound effect on the course of the war.

Expressing his own personal views with regard to the future development of aviation, the Chief of the Royal Air Staff stated that he believed that, in the next war, the existence of the British Empire would depend primarily on its Air Force. The giant aeroplane of the present day would be superseded by the air dreadnought of the future. But even the present aeroplane, in sufficient numbers, could rapidly decide the issue of war in favour of the Power which had supremacy at the start. The menace was one which threatened the Dominions as well as the United Kingdom, and it was quite possible that the enemy of to-morrow might be much nearer to them than the enemy of to-day. The bearing of this upon the dangers involved in Germany's expansion in Asia, and in her African and Colonial ambitions, was obvious. The essence of air strategy lay in surprise. He reminded the Imperial War Cabinet of what the First Sea Lord had said with regard to the difference between the conditions of the Navy from those of the Army, from the point of view of co-ordination of strategy in peace, due to the speed with which the Navies could move and come into action. In the case of the air, this factor of speed of movement and need for immediate readiness for action was even greater. The Air Force of the future would have to be always on a war footing. The desirability of expanding the present Air Staff into an Imperial Air Staff was urged. There should, in fact, be an Imperial Air Striking Force always ready. Behind that there would have to be a second line in reserve. To provide for that, it would be necessary to foster commercially our development. From the purely commercial point of view the immediate demand after the war would not be very great, and, unless steps were taken by the Governments of the Empire, there would be a collapse of all the enormous air industry built up during the war.

The Royal Air
Force:
Review of Pro-
duction and
Organisation by the
Secretary of State.

3. The Secretary of State for the Royal Air Force amplified the strategical review by the Chief of the Royal Air Staff—in which he expressed his entire agreement—by surveying the expansion of the Force, past and prospective, with regard to the different types of machines. He drew attention to the difficulties and limitations involved in the enormous preparations required for the expansion of the Air Force, more particularly in such matters as the provision of suitable training grounds, with accommodation, and the training of

pilots. The factors of man-power, time, and training imposed their limits throughout. He drew the special attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to the difficulty involved in any attempt at standardisation, owing to the continual introduction of new developments which rendered the newest types obsolete in a few months. The easiest type of machine to standardise would be the training machine; yet a type agreed upon as the best in March 1917, which was ready for production in November, was rendered obsolete in October by a new system of training instruction discovered by a young officer. The Germans were largely handicapped by the fact that they had standardised too early in this respect, and we were to-day reaping the advantage of our policy, or want of policy, in exploring in every direction during the earlier years of the war. Our newest motor, called the "A.B.C.," was, weight for horse-power, greatly superior not only to the German "Mercedes," but also to the American "Liberty," although the latter was a very satisfactory engine, which would prove most useful during the next twelve months. He had, in fact, sent a telegram to Lord Reading, for publication, about the performance of the "Liberty" motor, in order to cheer up the American public, which had been getting despondent about its air effort. Every endeavour was being made to reduce the number of superfluous types. From 39 types last year, there were to-day only 14 types used, only 9 of which were used in France. By next year he hoped we should only be using 6 types. On the other hand, new developments in the use of air warfare inevitably led to the creation of new types.

With regard to training, Sir William Weir pointed out that the training had wholly changed in character in the last few months. Not only was the number of hours of actual flying required before officers were sent to France greatly increased, but the intensity of training work done during that time was increased to an even greater extent. One consequence of this, no doubt, was a certain increase in accidents during the period of training, which was, however, far more than compensated by greater fighting efficiency and avoidance of casualties at the front. A very real difficulty in connection with the training was the fact that the great majority of the senior officers of the force were, in fact, almost boys, with perhaps eighteen months' or two years' training behind them, and with little of the knowledge of organisation and power of enforcing discipline possessed by the men in control of an organisation of the same size in other services. Every effort, however, was being made to tighten up the discipline.

Both Sir William Weir and General Sykes paid a high tribute to the part played by Canada and the other Dominions, both in the production of aircraft and in the efficiency of their *personnel*.

Considerable discussion followed on various points raised by the two surveys. Among the points specially discussed was the need for Allied agreement as to the air strategy to be followed.

In this connection the Chief of the Royal Air Staff admitted that the Air Strategy Committee at Versailles had only met twice, and had not been able to make progress owing to the refusal of the French to consider the question of an air offensive into the heart of Germany as a matter which should be specially prepared and organised for.

Another question, raised by the Minister of Munitions, was the desirability of securing a larger force of machines actually in the field relative to the total present output.

Mr. Hughes urged that the statements which the Imperial War Cabinet had heard really raised the question of the whole policy of the Government with regard to man-power. A steady continuance for two years of the losses of the last few months would leave the Empire crippled, whether the war were won or lost. It was essential that, at the Peace Conference and afterwards, we should not be exhausted and in a position that our policy should be dictated

to us by the United States or anyone else. It was, therefore, of the first importance to consider how far it was possible to conserve man-power by concentration on scientific developments, such as aviation.

It was suggested that, in so far as large masses of infantry were still required, the United States, with their untouched population, ought to provide them, and that we should concentrate upon more scientific development.

The Minister of Munitions noted, as an instance, that we were producing large numbers of tanks, which we were giving to the Americans, while we were putting our own men into the trenches.

The Prime Minister pointed out, on the other hand, that the Germans considered that we gave too much attention to the improvement of our appliances, and themselves concentrated much more on perfecting their training. There was no doubt that it was the high efficiency of the German army, from the point of view of training, and not their equipment, that had been responsible for their recent successes and relatively small losses which, on some of these occasions, they had incurred. The German machine-gun, for instance, was the same with which they had entered the war in 1914, and much inferior to ours. It was their tremendous specialisation in the training of men to use the machine-gun that had been the secret of their success.

The Imperial War Cabinet considered that the whole question of the proper direction in which our man-power could be most effectively and economically applied should, in the first instance, be considered by the Committee of Prime Ministers.

[Owing to its secrecy, the text of Sir William Weir's and General Sykes' statements will not be circulated, but a copy is on record in the personal custody of the Secretary of the War Cabinet, and can be read at the War Cabinet Offices on application to the Secretary.]

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 29, 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 23.

Minutes of the Twenty-third Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, July 9, 1918, at 11 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. SIR W. WEIR, Secretary of State for the Air Force.	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial Staff.	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.	The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bart., Minister of Shipping.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B.
	MR. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Captain L. BURGIS, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western
Front.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, of 100 German batteries which had been traced during the last six weeks on their way to the Western front from the East or from the interior of Germany, 88 had come to the British front. There was also a very considerable increase in the number of telegraph, telephone, and other engineer units coming to the British front. The German leave trains during the last three weeks going away from the front had been very light, while trains with troops returning from leave had been very full. Large numbers of machine-gun units had been sent to the school at Tongres, near Liège, for their battle training. Previous experience indicated that an attack would begin about a week after these units returned.

Our own position would be weakened by the withdrawal of the six French divisions of the D.A.N. from General Plumer's Army. These were, however, being replaced by three American divisions moved up in rear of the line. From the point of view of infantry, the exchange was, if anything, an advantage, and General Plumer and his Staff felt happier with the American troops than with these particular French divisions. On the other hand, it involved a considerable weakening in guns.

While the indications given above pointed to an attack against the British front, General Pétain's headquarters had just reported that they had practically made up their mind that the German attack would come in the Champagne between Rheims and the Argonne, the assumption being that the Germans would wish to secure the line of the Marne between Château-Thierry and Châlons in order to have a broader front for their subsequent attack against Paris.

Northern Russia.

2. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Attentive" had visited Kandalaksha, Kem, and Soroka. At the latter place a force was landed, and was welcomed by local delegates. The Bolsheviks had retreated south, destroying the railway between Soroka and Kem, but H.M.S. "Attentive," together with the military authorities, were working at restoring the line, and hoped to complete it this week. Local support was assured, and the opposing forces appeared unwilling to resist an organised attack.

Vladivostock.

3. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a delayed report from H.M.S. "Suffolk" stated that the Czech General had given as the causes leading to the delivery of his ultimatum: the continued attempts at pilfering arms and ammunition from the area guarded by the Czechs; the attempt to send military stores to the Irkutsk front; and the presence of armed enemy prisoners and enemy agents in the town. At a conference held on board H.M.S. "Suffolk" on the 27th June, the British, Japanese, and French consuls had decided to request the representatives of the Siberian Flotilla, who were present, to disarm their vessels and to guarantee the safety and lives of the crews. The disarmament had been effected on the 30th June, at the request of the Siberian Flotilla and with the consent of the Czech General, by the Japanese. A subsequent telegram, dated the 6th July, reported that, after the delivery to the Mayor of a proclamation, stating that the town and vicinity were under Allied protection, forces were landed from all the Allied ships present, including Americans, in order to patrol the place and to provide a permanent force at Czech headquarters, to act in concert with the Czechs in case of any movement against them.

Bombing Attacks.

4. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that an aerial attack was carried out against Constantinople on the 7th July, half a ton of bombs being dropped. All our machines had returned safely.

During the night of 7th-8th July, 6½ tons of bombs were dropped on Bruges and Ostend docks, canal, works, and aerodromes. One enemy aircraft was destroyed. All our machines returned safely.

The Air Situation.

5. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff reported that during the last four days the British air forces with the armies on the Western front had brought down 53 enemy aeroplanes, with a loss to ourselves of 11 machines. The Independent Force had, between the 5th and 8th July, raided Coblenz, Saarbrücken, Kaiserslautern, and Luxemburg, bringing down 4 machines with a loss of 2 machines to ourselves. Aerial resistance over enemy towns was undoubtedly increasing, but there was no further confirmation of a suggestion thrown out in the last weekly air Report that the enemy were withdrawing aeroplanes from the front for this purpose.

Meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles.

Allied Intervention in Russia.

6. The Prime Minister reported to the Imperial War Cabinet that he had brought before the Supreme War Council the resolutions previously passed by the Imperial War Cabinet (Imperial War Cabinet 22, Minute 1), together with a preface stating the arguments in favour of intervention in Russia in a form which definitely threw on President Wilson the responsibility of a refusal. Both the resolutions and the preface were adopted by the Supreme War Council, and were at once telegraphed to the Allied Ambassadors at Washington for presentation to President Wilson. Lord Reading had had a first interview with the President, which had not been very satisfactory, and was to have had another on the 8th July, the report of which had not yet come in. If the President should definitely refuse, a very serious decision would have to be faced.

American co-operation.

With regard to the question of American reinforcements, the British delegates, on arriving at Versailles, found the French had taken it upon themselves for M. Tardieu to make arrangements for the next nine months for the bringing over of American troops. This was done without consulting the British Government, who furnished two-thirds of the tonnage, and, indeed, without consulting General Pershing. This had necessitated some plain speaking, after which the Supreme War Council decided, on the motion of the British delegates, that the question of tonnage was to be settled between the American and British Governments.

Salonica.

With regard to the Balkans, the Supreme War Council had had the same experience of the French tendency to take things into their own hands without regard for the views of the Supreme War Council. The latter had, on the 1st June definitely decided, on the advice of the Military Representatives, in favour of a certain policy in the Balkans. Two days before the present Meeting our Military Representative at Versailles was informed that orders had been sent from the French War Office to the General Commanding in Macedonia involving an entire change in policy. Here, again, some plain speaking had been required, after which the matter was referred back to the Military Representatives for their consideration. In this connection the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had had to point out to the Supreme War Council the intimate connection of the diplomatic with the military situation in the Balkans, and the resolution passed by the Supreme War Council provided for the examination of the diplomatic aspect of the question by a special representative of each of the Powers, to examine the matter in conjunction with the Military Representatives. Lord Robert Cecil and Lord Derby had been deputed for that task by the British Government, and the former was going over to Paris.

Bulgaria.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs amplified to the Imperial War Cabinet the arguments affecting the diplomatic

situation as regards Bulgaria. He pointed out the various reasons -- disappointment with the prolongation of the war; the unpopularity of the representatives, both military and civil, of the German "Super-Ally" in Bulgaria; the German holding back of the northern Dobrudja, as a screw to extract concessions from Bulgaria; the permanent friction on the frontier with Turkey; the considerable hardships created by the exportation of food to the Central Powers; the recent change of Government, &c.—which might induce Bulgaria to consider the possibility of making peace. There was also the strong reluctance of Bulgaria to face the definite hostility of the United States, from whom both Bulgaria and Turkey expected help to relieve them from their serious financial embarrassments after the war. On the other hand, there were the obvious difficulties involved in the natural distrust of Greece and Serbia of any concessions to Bulgaria which they feared would be made at their expense. In his opinion, it would be fatal to do anything to cool the zeal of our Allies, more particularly if we did so with no security that we should get any result. It was essential that we should be thoroughly candid with a man like M. Venizelos. In any case, Mr. Balfour considered that the attitude of Bulgaria, and that of Germany's allies generally, and, indeed, of many neutrals, would be one of watchful expectancy until it was definitely established that the German boast of breaking down the Western front this summer had failed of its fulfilment.

As an illustration of the French methods referred to by the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs mentioned that the French Ambassador had come to him on the previous day with a written scheme from M. Pichon dealing with the proposed intervention in Siberia, under certain headings. The first of these headings laid down that the intervention should take place under the auspices of an American or French High Commissioner. On Mr. Balfour's pointing this out to M. Cambon and enquiring why Great Britain was ignored, M. Cambon had replied that this was what "these bureaucrats do," and had crossed out the words "or French."

Strike of
Aeroplane
Workers.

7. With reference to the present strike of aeroplane workers, the Minister of Munitions mentioned that he was seeing the representatives of the men that afternoon, and hoped that he would be able to dispose of the matter satisfactorily. If not, he would probably have to prosecute, as it would be a plain case where prosecution would be necessary (Paper G.T.-5055).

Imperial War
Cabinet Agenda.

8. With regard to the future business of the Imperial War Cabinet, the Secretary pointed out that the only general statements which had not yet been made or discussed were those on munitions, finance, and man-power. Very full papers had already been circulated as regards the latter by the Minister of National Service and by the oversea members, and a further discussion by the Imperial War Cabinet might not be necessary.

Peace Terms.

There was some discussion as to the best manner in which the question of peace terms should be approached by the Imperial War Cabinet. General Smuts mentioned that he was writing a paper on the German colonies, and Lord Curzon suggested that it would be desirable that there should be a brief statement as regards the developments which had taken place since last year in starting the foundations of the future system of Arab autonomy in Mesopotamia, Arabia, &c.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

The Minister of Munitions should make his statement on Thursday, the 11th July.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook to make a general statement on Tuesday, the 16th July, as regards terms of peace, taking as his basis last year's discussions and the reports of Lord Curzon's and Lord Milner's Committees, and indicating how far the conclusions then arrived at had been affected by subsequent military and political developments.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
July 9, 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 24.

Minutes of the Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, July 12, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	Major-General the Hon. S. C. MEWBURN, K.C., Minister of Militia and Defence, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. LORD WEIR, Secretary of State for the Air Force.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.

The following were also present :

Major-General P. P. DE B. RADCLIFFE, C.B., D.S.O., Director of Military Operations.	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Captain L. F. BURGIS, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western Front.

1. THE Director of Military Operations reported that there were a great many indications of a German attack on both sides of Rheims ; so many, in fact, that the Director of Military Intelligence was inclined to be sceptical and to think that they were deliberately being furnished by the Germans. There were certainly very definite indications of the reinforcement of the German heavy artillery in Flanders, and the Germans might also be influenced in their choice of points selected for attack by the knowledge that the divisions of the French D A.N. had been withdrawn from our front.

American Co-operation.

2. The Director of Military Operations reported that all five American divisions training with the British army were now considered fit to hold back lines. In answer to questions as to the location of the other American divisions, the Director of Military Operations stated that twelve of these were in line or effectively forming part of the French army, while another five were in various stages of training in rear of the French army.

There was some discussion as to the total effective combatant strength of the American troops in France.

The Prime Minister quoted the figures of our mission at American headquarters, which gave the total strength on the 26th June as 820,000, of which only 271,000 were rifles, or, say, 350,000, including machine-guns.

Some doubt was expressed how far General Pershing had, as a matter of fact, carried out the agreement that the troops brought over during the last three months should have been mainly infantry and machine-gunners. It was also suggested that the French, with their not unnatural anxiety for the safety of Paris, were keeping an undue proportion of the American troops behind their own line.

The Prime Minister stated that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had proposed to write a letter to General Foch drawing attention to these points, and, more generally, to the overwhelming weight of the attack which the Germans might be able to put against us. He considered that, instead of this letter going to General Foch from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, it should be a report from the latter to the Imperial War Cabinet, and that the Prime Minister should, on behalf of the Imperial War Cabinet, send it himself to General Foch, or, alternatively, should write to M. Clemenceau, inviting him to support General Wilson's representation to General Foch. It would be useful in this manner to remind General Foch that he was not merely a French but an Allied Commander-in-Chief, and responsible to the British as well as to the French Government.

The Imperial War Cabinet agreed that—

The Prime Minister should take one of the courses of action suggested.

The New Tanks.

3. The Director of Military Operations reported that the new Mark V Tanks had been in action for the first time in the recent engagement at Hamel, and had been most favourably reported on. The experience which the Australians had had of the old type of tanks last year had not been very favourable. This time their experience had been very different, and the Australian troops had shown themselves to be very quick in learning how to co-operate effectively with the tanks.

Albania.

4. The Director of Military Operations reported that the news from Albania was very satisfactory. The Italians had just taken Berat, capturing 1,500 prisoners, and there was some hope that the Italian cavalry advancing up the valley of the Semeni might cut off

a good many more of the Austrian force retreating from Berat. This success not only shortened the line considerably, but afforded extra protection to Valona, and would tend to clear the French flank so as to make it possible for the French to operate round to the north of Lake Ochrida.

In this connection the Deputy First Sea Lord reported that the Italian operations had been greatly assisted by the monitors "Earl of Peterborough" and "Sir Thomas Picton," and by the Royal Air Force, whose machines co-operated not only from Valona, but also across the Adriatic from Taranto and Otranto.

The Air Situation.

5. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff reported that the weather had been unfavourable for reconnaissance work, but that some 45 tons of explosives had been dropped on naval and military objectives. The enemy had attacked Dunkirk on the night of 7th-8th July, without inflicting casualties or damage. Since the last report we had brought down forty-two enemy machines as against a loss of ten British machines.

Statement by the Minister of Munitions.

6. The Minister of Munitions presented to the Imperial War Cabinet a general survey of the work, past and prospective, of his Department. He pointed out, at the outset, that his Department was not responsible for the munitions requirements of the Admiralty, which had a separate establishment of its own, about one-fifth of the size of the Ministry of Munitions. This duplication of Departments led to difficulties with regard to labour and contracts, and to considerable friction. He admitted that there were great practical difficulties in the way, but if this duplication could be dispensed with it might be possible to effect one of the few large remaining economies possible in the matter of man-power and production. In his view, the best system would be one under which the three fighting services, *i.e.*, the Navy, the Army, and the Royal Air Force, drew for their man-power upon a single Department—the Department of National Service—and for their supplies from a single Munitions Department.

The whole work of munitions depended, he pointed out, upon the two main factors of labour and tonnage. The total number of persons employed in munitions, including Admiralty munition work, was 3,400,000, of whom 980,000 were women. Of these, 2,000,000 men and 750,000 women were employed under the Ministry of Munitions. The essentially patriotic character of labour was shown by the fact that labour troubles immediately diminished when the situation at the front became critical. The total number of days lost by strikes during the preceding year had been more than made good by the voluntary surrender of the Easter holidays, which the workers had made after the crisis of the 21st March. The Department was, in fact, 1,000,000 days' working time in credit over the transaction. At the same time he wished to point out that labour had been increasingly disturbed by the process of substitution and dilution, which had been ceaselessly at work and cut many of their most treasured traditions. In this respect, the limit was very nearly reached, and he urged that we should run the risk of making a great mistake if we overstrained our resources of scientific production.

As regards tonnage, Mr. Churchill pointed out that the Shipping Controller had enabled him practically to maintain, during the present year, the standard of 1,000,000 tons a month which he had maintained throughout 1917, and which he proposed to take as his basis for calculations for 1919. Two-thirds of this tonnage consisted of steel and explosives, or the raw materials required for making them. The steel budget of the Ministry of Munitions for the current year amounted to 8,000,000 tons, of which the Admiralty

took 2,500,000 for its own purpose and for shipbuilding; 2,000,000 were required for shells; 1,000,000 for War Office requirements, including railways; 1,000,000 for other munitions for the Royal Air Force and the construction of tanks; and 1,500,000 for the civil needs of the country. He gave figures showing the very large increase in the volume of shell which could be hurled at the enemy per week as compared with the earlier period of the war, but suggested that in this respect the effective limit had been reached, and the best line of advance lay not in trying to increase the gross bulk, but by securing greater range out of the guns, in order to get a more effective volume of concentration of projectiles, both for attack and defence. In this connection he gave some details with regard to the new British field gun, and to the arrangements contemplated for improving the range and life of our heavy guns, as well as with regard to certain special types of artillery required for particular purposes. Drawing attention to the ease with which the 1,200 guns lost in March had been replaced, and giving the figures of the substantial reserve immediately available, and of the heavy guns with which he had promised to equip the American forces, he mentioned that the output of new and repaired guns during the week ending the 15th June last was practically double the output of the twelve months preceding the outbreak of the war; in other words, an increase of 10,000 per cent. in output capacity. Our rifle position, which had been a great factor of delay in 1914, now presented no difficulties. We had an ample output and a very large reserve. In addition to that, we had a large stock of Russian rifles for whose manufacture we had arranged in America, and which we had now available either as an additional reserve or for any contingencies which might occur in Russia. With regard to machine-guns, he mentioned that the output of the preceding week was two and a half times as great as the total number of machine-guns in existence with the British Army at the outbreak of war. The figures of output were now on such a scale that any change of type involved most serious difficulties. Even to start the production of a new type took something like twelve to eighteen months. The Ministry of Munitions and the War Office had, therefore, come to the decision not to make any change in existing types of machine-guns, but, in so far as they made a change at all, to proceed direct to the manufacture of the new automatic rifle.

The explosives position was very good, and we could open out our present output very considerably if required. The only weak feature in it was the dependency on Chile for nitrates, which involved a very long journey and the locking up of much tonnage. We were proceeding with extraction of nitrates from the air, but could only do so on a moderate scale, unlike Germany, which had laid herself out earlier for this type of production and was able to supply not only her war needs, but her agriculture. A very marked feature in the development of the war was the progressive increase in the use of chemicals, more particularly the various types of poison gas. Mr. Churchill gave some details and figures of the development in this direction, and pointed out the bearing of this new type of warfare upon the general battle tactics which would have to be adopted.

With regard to aeroplanes, Mr. Churchill mentioned that the detailed figures had already been given by Lord Weir on the previous occasion. He only wished to draw special attention to the very serious reduction in the output of engines during the last three months, consequent on the taking of skilled men out of the aircraft factories for the Army. His present output was only some 70 per cent. of what he had hoped to obtain.

Lord Weir agreed as to the seriousness of the labour position, but expressed the view that if the "Liberty" motor came in in a satisfactory quantity the skilled labour position might be saved.

Mr. Churchill mentioned that he and Lord Weir were setting up a searching statistical investigation in order to make sure that the Royal Air Force was getting full value out of the total number of machines supplied.

With regard to railways, Mr. Churchill considered that the margin had been run too fine, and that a larger allocation of material would become necessary.

With regard to the tank programme, again, large as it was, he did not consider it sufficiently large, and added that here, again, the loss of labour was prejudicing the situation.

Mr. Churchill paid a special tribute to the remarkable development in the production of munitions in Canada, pointing out that distance and shortage of tonnage had prevented Australia doing more in the direct production of munitions, although she had furnished an invaluable contribution in the matter of raw material. The production of India had been small, up to date, but the possibilities were being explored for development of a plant capable of supplying 15 divisions. This did not seem to him sufficient, in view of the possibility of the war lasting to 1920 and extending towards the frontiers of India. He considered that the Ministry of Munitions and the India Office should meet together and prepare a large scheme for the development of big munition plants in India, capable of dealing with such a contingency. His attention had been drawn to this important matter by Sir S. Sinha's remarks at a previous meeting (Imperial War Cabinet 17, Minute 15).

Mr. Churchill summed up his review by pointing out that there were really two general questions which had to be answered :—

- (a.) How we were to use our remaining resources of men and material for the supreme moment of the war, and to maintain the strength of the British Empire ;
- (b.) How we were to defeat the German armies on the Western front, and whether we could do this in 1919 or would have to wait until 1920.

To wait until 1920 involved exposing India to serious risks. At the same time, the greatest difficulty with which we were confronted was that of impatience ; it was essential that we should choose our climax well ahead, and subordinate all that we did in between to that climax. It was clear, in his view, that man-power alone could not secure a decision on the Western front in 1919, especially as the Germans had opportunities for methodical retreat which were denied to us in our present situation. Success, in his opinion, could only be secured by the development of the scientific and mechanical side of warfare. He looked to a great vehicular attack, fighting tanks accompanied by large numbers of cross-country vehicles, and to air superiority, to achieve our object. If this was sound as a matter of general Allied policy, it was obviously sound from the purely British point of view. Moreover, with regard to the Americans, the limiting factor now was not either men, nor even tonnage, but equipment. It was essential that we should be in a position to furnish that equipment. He earnestly begged the Imperial War Cabinet to consider whether we had not reached the limit in drawing man-power away from munitions.

A short discussion followed on the point raised by Mr. Churchill in the concluding part of his review. It was pointed out that the withdrawal of skilled labour from munitions could not be dissociated from the general problem of recruiting, which had involved the calling up of men of older age and had made it very difficult to keep men of the younger ages in munitions. The policy adopted by the British War Cabinet had only been adopted after much deliberation and in an extreme emergency, which was now being relieved by the arrival of the American divisions.

The Prime Minister mentioned that the question of the character

of the coming year's operations had been specially referred, by a resolution of the last meeting of the Supreme War Council, to the Military Representatives at Versailles, who were the only body absolutely free and untrammelled by urgent current work. The matter, however, was also being considered by the British Imperial General Staff. In answer to a suggestion of Mr. Hughes that the matter required considering from the particular standpoint of the British Empire as well, and that definite conclusions ought to be reached before the Prime Ministers separated and went back to their own Dominions, the Prime Minister agreed that it would be desirable that the matter should be fully discussed by the Committee of Prime Ministers. He suggested that the General Staff should first produce its own preliminary report as a basis for the Committee's discussions.

The Director of Military Operations undertook to produce such a report by the 18th or 19th July.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

The question of future military policy and of the allocation of our man-power should be discussed by the Committee of Prime Ministers as soon as the General Staff had furnished its report.

The Minister of Munitions undertook to get into touch with the Secretary of State for India and the Indian members of the Imperial War Cabinet, with a view to preparing a scheme for the development of India's munition output, having regard to the possibilities of the war being prolonged to 1920 and extending farther Eastwards.

The Secretary drew attention to the fact that there had been some doubt as to the precise wording of the resolution of the Supreme War Council referred to by the Prime Minister, and suggested that it would be desirable to telegraph to the British Military Representative at Versailles to push on with his study of the campaign for the coming year, without waiting for that point to be settled.

The Imperial War Cabinet instructed—

The Secretary to telegraph as suggested.

[Owing to its secrecy, the text of Mr. Churchill's statement will not be circulated, but a copy is on record in the personal custody of the Secretary of the War Cabinet, and can be read at the War Cabinet offices on application to the Secretary.]

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
July 12, 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 25.

Minutes of the Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, July 18, 1918, at 11.45 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Hon. N. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. LORD WEIR, Secretary of State for the Air Force.	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 5).	The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 5).	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	The Right Hon. LORD BEAVERBROOK, Minister of Information (for Minute 6).
Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.	
Mr. PHILIP KERR.	

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary.*

Captain CLEMENT JONES, *Assistant Secretary.*

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary.*

Western Front.

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the total number of German divisions identified in the present offensive had been reduced, on fuller information, to 27, of which 7 belonged to Prince Rupprecht's reserves, 13 to the Crown Prince's reserves, whilst 7 had been in the line before the offensive. All of those last mentioned were west of Rheims, and none had been identified east of it. As the divisions in line east of Rheims were mostly inferior divisions, the fact of their not having been identified might, as far as it went, indicate that a serious attack by specially trained fresh reserve divisions had been contemplated. It was at any rate possible that the French claim to have disorganised a heavy German attack in the Champagne by putting down their barrage just before the Germans, might be correct, and, if so, the attack might conceivably have included a great many more divisions than had been identified. On the other hand, it was also quite possible that the Rupprecht divisions identified in this offensive represented no addition to the Crown Prince's army, but were the result of some previous exchange of from 6-10 divisions done for the purpose of deceiving us. The German idea would presumably be to draw as many of the Allied divisions south as possible by this feint on a very large scale, and then to attack in the north, keeping Amiens under very heavy fire in order to interfere with the bringing back of the troops. British General Headquarters had, on the previous day, been inclined to think that a German attack by 16 to 18 divisions on the Kemmel front was imminent in three or four days' time. On the whole, he was inclined to think that the present attack was not the big attack, and that the big attack would be coming elsewhere. Meanwhile, information had just come in that General Foch had started a counter-attack that morning against the Germans on a front of from 35 to 40 kilometres between Torcy and Nouvron, *i.e.*, against the western face of the salient between Soissons and Château-Thierry. Subsequent information came in during the course of the meeting to the effect that the counter-attack had made progress to a depth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles, and that one division had taken over 700 prisoners.

With regard to the British troops, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff mentioned that of the four divisions which General Foch had originally intended to send to the extreme right flank of his line in the Champagne, the two leading ones had been detrained at Arcis-sur-Aube and were moving up to the line Châlons-Epernay, while the other two had been stopped further back and were detrained on the line Clermont-Senlis. These last as they were still on the right side of Paris, could be run back to the British front in twenty-four to forty-five hours' time, provided trains were available.

Submarine Losses.

2. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a convoy of 32,000 American troops had reached Liverpool on the previous night.

The steamship "Carpathia," 13,600 tons, had been attacked by a submarine and sunk about 166 miles from the Scilly Islands. There had been no casualties.

Athens had reported that a Spanish steamer, having aboard M. López de Vega, the Spanish Minister to Greece, had been submarined and sunk although flying the diplomatic flag and although the German Government had been previously informed of his sailing.

The special service vessels steamships "Bailey" and "Antic," claimed to have sunk an enemy submarine north-east of Kinnaird Head on the evening of the 14th July.

The Air Situation.

3. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff reported that the weather in France had not been very favourable for aviation; thirty-five

enemy machines had been brought down as well as fifteen kite balloons—an exceptionally high proportion of the latter. The independent force had carried out a series of short raids.

In Italy we had brought down thirty enemy machines, to a loss of three of our own.

American Aviation.

4. In answer to a question about American aviation, the Chief of the Royal Air Staff stated that there were no complete American squadrons in action yet. Meanwhile, the personnel of four squadrons had been working with our squadrons. Two of these had just been formed into squadrons and equipped by us, and two more were to be equipped shortly.

Desirability of Undertaking an Offensive in the Balkans.

5. Lord Robert Cecil reported the result of a Conference of Allied Diplomatic and Military Representatives held on Thursday, the 11th July, at Versailles, in accordance with Resolution No. 5 of the 7th Session of the Supreme War Council (Paper No. I.C.-72), which he had been deputed to attend on behalf of the Imperial War Cabinet. He stated that he had gone with Lord Derby to see General Sackville-West, the British Military Representative in Versailles, who informed him that, in spite of repeated applications, he had not been able to ascertain any information about the French plans for the proposed offensive. He then expressed to General Sackville-West the view that there were only two methods of getting Bulgaria out of the war: one was to convince King Ferdinand that his interest lay in abandoning the Central Powers; the other was to promote a revolution in Bulgaria with the object of bringing into power a more friendly Government. In either case he considered, and was supported in this view by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that unless the offensive produced a really serious military result, it could not have any political consequences. He had drawn attention to the fact that if the Greeks and Serbs took a leading part in the proposed offensive, it would probably tend to rouse Bulgarian national feeling. An attack might also have the effect of causing Bulgaria and Turkey—between whom there was considerable tension at the present moment, both in connection with the disposal of northern Dobrudja and over the frontier of Thrace—to compose their differences. He was strongly of the opinion that to make any offer to Bulgaria at the moment would be a serious blunder, and would only lead Bulgaria to think that the Allies were in a bad way. At the same time, he had made it plain that while realising the political objections to an offensive unless sure of success, the British Government were not irreconcilably opposed to an offensive as such, and only wished to be more fully informed.

In the afternoon the actual Conference took place. It was presided over by M. Pichon, and was attended by the Italian Ambassador and by Mr. Frazier (who held a watching brief for the United States), the Military Representatives, and a considerable number of other people, which made the discussion of secret matters undesirable. After Lord R. Cecil had impressed on the Conference the views already conveyed to General Sackville-West, General Guillaumat expounded his plan for an offensive which he was in favour of, both because he believed the Bulgarian *moral* to be seriously affected, and because he thought it desirable to keep up the *moral* of the Serbs and Greeks. He did not, however, propose that the offensive should take place till October—a complete change of attitude from that which he had previously adopted.

M. Pichon, in his speech, did not dissent from the general proposition that the proposed offensive would only be of political value if it were a serious one, but he deprecated any idea of negotiations with the Bulgarians until they were thoroughly beaten, and

was particularly indignant with the suggestion, which he attributed to the British Government that Constantinople, should be offered to King Ferdinand.

To Lord Robert Cecil's suggestion that the natural indignation of the Allies against King Ferdinand should not be allowed to go to the length of refusing to consider possible offers from Bulgaria if they were satisfied that there was something genuine behind them, the Italian Ambassador had agreed whole-heartedly, and M. Pichon with considerable reluctance.

The Conference subsequently passed the following resolution :—

“ Resolution.

“ The Diplomatic and Military Representatives' meeting at Versailles on the 11th July, 1918, in accordance with the decision of the Supreme War Council, 4th July, 1918, reached the following agreement :—

“ From the Political Point of View :

“ 1. That it is advisable to study the question of a general offensive in the Balkans with a view to the effect that may result from it on the Bulgarian situation.

“ That it is not desirable to carry out this offensive unless it leads to a victory of more than local importance.

“ From the Military Point of View :

“ That it is advisable to request the Military Representatives of the Supreme War Council to examine the conditions of a general offensive with a view to its probable results, both as to gain of ground and as to its effect on the Bulgarian army.

“ The French Government will be requested to supply to the Military Representatives complete information on the general offensive in project, as well as on the method of execution. The question of local operations, as previously settled, remains unaffected by this resolution.

Diplomatic Representatives :

(Signed) “ S. PICHON.
“ ROBERT CECIL.
“ DERBY.
“ BONIN LONGARE.

Military Representatives :

(Signed) “ BELIN.
“ TASKER H. BLISS.
“ DI ROBILANT.
“ C. SACKVILLE-WEST.”

After the Conference Lord Robert Cecil suggested to M. Pichon the idea of an interchange of views between the Allies on Allied Policy in the Balkans, and when he found M. Pichon shocked by this he watered his suggestion down to Allied Policy in Macedonia, which M. Pichon did not favour, but at any rate promised to consider.

The Imperial War Cabinet approved of Lord Robert Cecil's Report, and instructed the Secretary to inform Versailles that the resolution of 11th July is approved by the British Government.

Publication in
America of Total
British Casualties.

6. The Minister of Information laid before the Imperial War Cabinet the desirability, from the point of view of propaganda, of publishing the total British casualties in America (see Appendix). We had many enemies in America who concentrated on suggesting that we were not playing our full part in the war as compared with France ; that we had only 350,000 rifles in France, and were keeping

a large army in England in order to be in a strong position at the end of the war. Nothing could dispose of this campaign so effectually as an official publication of our casualty lists.

Lord Milner stated that from the purely military point of view there was no particular objection to the publication of these lists. We already published nominal lists, and all the Germans had to do was to add these up in order to ascertain the totals. They might not believe that we gave the right figures, but this would apply equally to any statement of totals which were published. In fact, the publication would give very little information to the German General Staff and would be a disappointment to the German public.

It was generally agreed that the real difficulty lay not in the military objections, or in any doubt as to the usefulness of publication, from the point of view of propaganda in America, but in the possible effect of the sudden official announcement of these very heavy figures of something like 3,000,000 total casualties on the British public. It was argued, on the one side, that the immediate effect on public opinion might be very depressing, and that a still more serious effect would be the strengthening it might give to the arguments of the pacifists, whose figures of casualties were not generally taken seriously. This might specially be the case if the enemy subsequently made peace offers which were thoroughly unsatisfactory in themselves, but might on the surface appear plausible. Against this it was pointed out by Sir Robert Borden and others that the frank publication of casualties had always had a steadying effect upon public opinion in Canada and elsewhere. The British nation would feel the need for a satisfactory end of the war after all the sacrifices which it had made. In any case the really important question, if it came to the rejection by the Government of plausible enemy offers of peace, was the extent of the confidence felt by the public in the Government, and this would depend on the frankness with which the Government had treated the public.

It was suggested by Mr. Massey and other members that there were many other ways of bringing out the extent of the effort and sacrifice made by the United Kingdom besides the publication of casualties. The French as a matter of fact had managed to bring home to the American public the extent of their sacrifices without ever publishing a single figure of their casualties. The importance was more particularly pointed out of laying stress on the vital part performed in the war by our Navy.

The Prime Minister suggested that as he had to make a statement in Parliament at the end of the session in a few days' time, he might attempt to review the extent of the efforts and sacrifices made by the United Kingdom and by the British Empire as a whole, drawing special attention to the work of the Navy, without actually giving figures of casualties. If that did not have the desired effect in America, the question of publishing casualties might be considered again.

The Imperial War Cabinet agreed with this suggestion.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
July 18, 1918.

APPENDIX.

G.T.-4954.

Memorandum to the War Cabinet from the Minister of Information on the Subject of Periodical Publication in America of Total Casualties in the British Army.

I WISH to place before the War Cabinet the question of issuing a periodic list of total casualties in the British Army for circulation in the United States.

Information received from America lays great stress on the utterly false impression prevailing there of the proportion of the fighting in France done by troops from the United Kingdom. The continual references to the performances of troops from the Dominions produce on the American mind the idea that these are doing most of the fighting, and bearing most of the losses. Such an impression has a very bad effect on the American view of Great Britain, and the situation will not improve, as big lists of American casualties begin to come in and are published.

I am taking various steps to meet this difficulty, but I believe one of the most effective would be the periodic publication of our total casualties. I approached the Secretary of State for War on the subject, and he has replied that he would have no objection to the publication of our total casualties up to a certain date, and subsequent publications from time to time, but that he could not take such a step without the consent of the War Cabinet. I would therefore ask that the War Cabinet give the requisite authority to the Secretary of State for War and the Minister of Information to make this publication by joint arrangement between themselves.

BEAVERBROOK.

June 25, 1918.

SECRET.

IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 26.

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Minutes of the Twenty-sixth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London, at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, July 23, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present :

The PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Hon. N. W. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bt., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
	Major - General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

Major-General G. M. W. MACDONOGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.
	Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. STORR, *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

Western Front.

1. THE Director of Military Intelligence described the present position with the aid of a map. He stated that on the previous day there had been no infantry action east of Rheims, but to the west of that town the enemy had offered a very strong resistance to the French advance. The French had crossed the Marne in at least three places, which General Macdonogh indicated on the map, and had secured possession of high ground to the north of the river. On Sunday night the Germans had made a counter-attack, which had achieved a temporary success, but the following day the French had recovered all lost ground and had made further progress. The position to-day, therefore, was quite satisfactory.

As regards the possibility of an enemy attack in another sector of the Western front, General Macdonogh said that if such an attack were projected, there were signs that the enemy would probably select the Kemmel area. Indications pointing to this supposition were that sixteen heavy batteries had entered that area since the 1st instant, and that two cavalry divisions had been transferred to Flanders from Alsace-Lorraine.

General Macdonogh, proceeding, said that, according to information received the previous day, General Foch had withdrawn since last month from the immediate fighting area, nineteen French, two American, and two Italian divisions.

The Prime Minister said that he had received a communication from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, dated 10 P.M., 22nd July, stating that he had seen General Foch, and that the general situation was regarded as most satisfactory. All reports described the *moral* of the French troops as excellent, and there were good grounds for hoping that the present success might be still further exploited.

German Divisions
Employed. §

2. The Director of Military Intelligence said that the Germans had now thrown in 3 fresh divisions. Since the French had started their counter-attack, 24 enemy divisions had been identified as being engaged between Soissons and Château-Thierry, making a total of 57 German divisions between Soissons and east of Rheims. No more divisions from Prince Rupprecht's army had been identified as coming south. Two divisions from the Crown Prince's forces had been transferred from Von Hutier's army to the IInd Army under Prince Rupprecht.

Other Fronts.

3. The Director of Military Intelligence said there was nothing of importance to report in regard to the other theatres of operations. The French had made a small advance in Albania, and it was reported that the Germans intended to transfer all young and fit men from their divisions in the East to the Western front.

Bombing Raid at
Cattaro.

4. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that four D.H. machines, with one escorting seaplane, had carried out an attack on Cattaro on the 21st July. One machine failed to return, and it was feared that it had been shot down. Bombs were dropped in the vicinity of the submarine base at Cattaro, and two were seen to explode among the submarines, and one near the submarine quarters.

Bombing Raids on
Belgian Ports.

5. During the day of the 22nd July bombs were dropped on Ostend, Bruges, and Zeebrugge. Enemy air activity had been considerable, thirty enemy aircraft being engaged, of which four were driven down. During the night of the 21st-22nd instant two Gothas were brought down by anti-aircraft gunfire. Two of our machines were missing.

German
Submarines
off the American
Coast.

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a German submarine had attacked a tug and barges 33 miles off the Massachusetts coast. The tug had not been sunk, but the barges, with women and children on board, had been set afire by shells.

Russia:
Allied Intervention.

7. The Prime Minister explained to the Indian representatives that, owing to an oversight, they had not been asked with the Dominion Prime Ministers to attend the previous day's War Cabinet (War Cabinet 450, Minute 8), at which the answer to President Wilson's *aide-mémoire* had been sanctioned. He apologised to them for this, and trusted that they were in agreement with the message that had been sent.

The Indian representatives expressed their entire concurrence with the action that had been taken.

Channels of
Communication
between the
United Kingdom
and the Dominions.

8. The Imperial War Cabinet discussed the following resolutions which had been passed by the Imperial War Conference:—

- (1.) That this Conference is of the opinion that the development which has taken place in the relations between the United Kingdom and the Dominions necessitates such a change in administrative arrangements and in the channels of communication between their Governments as will bring them more directly in touch with each other.
- (2.) That the Imperial War Cabinet be invited to give immediate consideration to the creation of suitable machinery for this purpose.

Mr. Hughes said it was generally agreed that the time had come when the self-governing Dominions should be in direct touch with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The present system of communication, however suitable to what might be called the Colonial days, was not suited to the present circumstances. The matter was one which had been urged before at Imperial Conferences, but the British Government had taken the view that it would not do to overburden the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Since then, however, the creation of the Imperial War Cabinet had furnished a machinery which seemed suitable for the purpose. While the Imperial War Cabinet was in session the Dominion Governments in fact discussed matters directly in a Cabinet of Governments: Prime Ministers of the Dominions were in direct touch with the Prime Minister of Great Britain. When they separated they would no longer be in direct touch, but have to meander again through the indirect channels of the Colonial Office. He wanted to exchange this for direct touch with the British Prime Minister as Chairman of the Imperial War Cabinet. He considered that in future the Colonial Office should no longer exercise any powers of administration as regards the Dominions, and that, *inter alia*, the appointment of Governors-General should be a matter for the Prime Minister. He did not wish to create a subsidiary Department in which this matter was entirely handed over by the Prime Ministers to another Minister. What was wanted was something more than a mere change from one Department to another. He wanted a formal but real recognition of the fact that the Dominions were participants in the councils of the Empire on a footing of equality. They were Governments, each sovereign or quasi-sovereign in its own sphere, consulting with each other about their common affairs.

Sir Robert Borden in supporting Mr. Hughes said that he had had experience as Prime Minister of three different Secretaries of State for the Colonies, and readily paid his tribute to the ability, devotion, and consideration with which they had conducted their task, and to the broad-minded attitude they had shown in the

despatch of their duties. From first to last he had not a word of criticism against the attitude of the Colonial Office. But the change suggested was an inevitable consequence of the step taken by the Prime Minister in December 1916 in summoning the Imperial War Cabinet. He regarded that as a wise step, justified even if it lasted only for the duration of the war, though he understood that it was to form the basis of a system for giving the Dominions an adequate voice in Imperial affairs in the future. He pointed out that the Dominions had come into the war voluntarily, as free nations of the Empire, because they believed it to be their duty. But the British Government could not call upon Canada to come into another war with regard to the causes of which she had had no voice. Canada was a nation of 8,000,000 people, twice as large as the United States when they became independent, and they must have a voice in foreign affairs. Unless she could have that voice in the foreign relations of the Empire as a whole, she would before long have an independent voice in her own foreign affairs outside the Empire. At present the Imperial War Cabinet met for only two months in the year. It was essential that there should be means of constant consultation, and that the relationship between the Dominions and the United Kingdom which existed during the Session of the Imperial War Cabinet should continue for the whole twelve months. It was with this object in view that direct communication between the Dominion Governments and the Imperial War Cabinet as a body regarded as in constant session was advocated by them. How this should be worked out was in part an Imperial concern, in part a matter of domestic concern to the British Government. There was no desire, on the one hand, to impose too formidable a burden upon the British Prime Minister or, on the other hand, to create a condition of things in which his direct connection with Dominion affairs should be nominal rather than real. He ventured to throw out suggestions as to three possible ways in which a solution might be found. In the first place, the matter might be left entirely with the Prime Minister. Or secondly, the Prime Minister might be *ex officio* Secretary of State for Imperial affairs, but have an Assistant Secretary or understudy to conduct the correspondence with the Dominions on routine matters. Or thirdly, it might be possible to have an Imperial Secretary of State separate from the Prime Minister and responsible for keeping the different Members of the Imperial War Cabinet in close and constant touch with one another.

In answer to a question whether his resolution included the permanent maintenance of a Dominion Minister in the United Kingdom, Sir Robert Borden said that he had not thought out that particular point, though as a matter of fact Canada throughout the war had had a member of its Government resident in London.

Mr. Massey associated himself with what Sir Robert Borden had said about the last three Secretaries of State for the Colonies and of the Colonial Office. No set of men could have been more courteous, painstaking, and more successful in dealing with the problems which they had taken in hand. With regard to the actual resolution, with which he agreed, he considered everything depended on the future of the Imperial War Cabinet, which he understood was to continue as a permanent institution. The essential thing from his point of view was that each oversea Dominion should maintain a resident Minister in this country, so as to enable the Imperial Cabinet to meet at regular intervals. The Dominion Governments could then communicate with the British Government through their own Ministers. For this purpose it was essential to have Ministers, not High Commissioners, and these Ministers would have to keep in touch with their own Dominions by at least yearly visits home. As far as New Zealand was concerned, improvements in the means of communication had been brought about by the Panamá Canal, which would render that feasible. He doubted whether it was

possible for the whole responsibility for inter-Imperial communications to be placed upon the Prime Minister

General Smuts said that if he had been present at the Imperial Conference, he would have dissented from the second part of the resolution, which asked the Imperial War Cabinet to give immediate consideration to the creation of suitable machinery for the purpose of more direct communication. There was general agreement as to fundamentals. The Colonial Office embodied the practical wisdom of the British people, and its conduct of affairs in the past had been one of the marvels of British policy. Nevertheless, there was general agreement that the position had changed, and that the old machinery would no longer suit the case. The change was two-fold. In the first place, the young nations of the Empire had risen to nationhood, more particularly since the war, in a way that had never been contemplated before. If the Empire was to endure, it must endure on a basis of equality, and that implied the creation of some machinery of equality. In the second place, the Government of the United Kingdom had completely changed from what it had been even 10 years ago. The War Cabinet system was an entirely new instrument of Government. What was required was to devise a constitution for the Empire which should take cognisance of these two facts. The problem, in his opinion, was soluble, but at this moment in the midst of the war, and with the British Government overwhelmed with enormous and urgent problems, he could not conceive a more difficult task than that of devising a new organisation. The Prime Minister was, more particularly at the present moment, so overwhelmed with work that the mere mention of any additional burden showed the impossibility of such a thing. The whole question bristled with difficulties. It involved a change in the position of the Governors-General, as well as a corresponding change in the representation of the Dominions in London. There was also the question of the status of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates in this connection. He did not regard the question as a side issue. Whatever the war might mean, it meant a new era and a new organisation in the history of the British Empire. But this was a matter which would require the most ample consideration. He himself would therefore urge that the Imperial War Cabinet should not go beyond affirming the general expression of opinion contained in Part 1 of the resolution, and would leave the detailed consideration of the question for afterwards. To do anything else would only mean some unsuitable compromise. He did not want to make two bites at the cherry, and would therefore prefer to see the question shelved for the present.

Mr. Lloyd said that, while in general agreement with the resolution, he was very sceptical as to the possibility of the Prime Minister being able to give due attention to the work involved in dealing with the Dominions. He considered that there should be permanent Ministerial representation of the Dominions in London as far as possible and a special Secretary of State to represent the Dominions, except when the Prime Ministers or other Ministers of the Dominions were actually present. He was not in sympathy with the idea that the question should be wholly shelved. He considered that some step might be taken in cutting out the circumvolution to the present system of communication, even if it were only to cut out the communication through the Governor or Governor-General.

Mr. Balfour pointed out that the real crux of the problem lay in how to secure unity of control to equal States over a single foreign policy. There was obviously no need for unity of control or representation on some common body as regards local affairs. Even as regards the army and navy, it was possible to have a separate War Office and Admiralty for each Dominion, though there would, of course, have to be arrangements to secure a common policy for common action in time of war. But it was not possible to have more than one Foreign Office or one foreign policy at a time. That

was the problem the solution of which was most difficult to find. A mere allocation of certain positions in the Foreign Office to the Dominions as a matter of right, would not go to the root of the matter. As long as foreign policy remained the most important Imperial interest, as it seemed likely to do, that problem had to be faced. If the united strength of the Empire was to be put forward for any external purpose, the Dominions would have to exercise a share in the control of a single Foreign Office.

Sir Robert Borden remarked that unless the Dominions shared in the direction of foreign policy they could not share in the responsibility which it entailed.

Mr. Hughes pointed out that this resolution was severely limited to the immediate question of communication. The wider question of a permanent share in the control of the Imperial policy after the war would have to be decided at a later stage.

Mr. Montagu said that, from the point of view of India, he was inclined to share General Smuts' attitude. If the Dominions were to be put into direct communication with the Prime Minister, he did not see how the same could be done with regard to India. The Prime Minister could not certainly be Secretary of State for India as well as for the Dominions. He thought that if the Dominions gained something in this way which was not granted to India, it might have an unfavourable effect there. He referred to the fact that the question of Imperial organisation was also being discussed by one of the Committees of the Ministry of Reconstruction, which was dealing with Departmental Affairs. Among the suggestions thrown out had been one that the Prime Minister should be Secretary of State for all Imperial affairs, having under him three separate Ministers for the Dominions, India, and the Crown Colonies.

Mr. Chamberlain suggested that as regards the narrower question of communication, that was a matter of detail which could be worked out without great difficulty. As regards the larger question of the share of the Dominions in the decision of common Imperial policy, he asked whether it was not possible for Sir Robert Borden and those who shared his views to furnish some indication of the methods which might be suitable for bringing about the result they aimed at.

Sir Robert Borden said that while he considered that the larger question would have to be solved if the Empire was to keep together, he agreed that it was a matter which must be taken up at a special Conference after the war. Meanwhile the war was going on. The terms of peace were, in fact, being made every day. All that he asked at present was that there should be a direct method of communication. This did not forestall the wider question in any way, or, as far as he could see, involve any danger. He saw no reason why that question should be shelved.

The Prime Minister said it was important to find out exactly what was being discussed, and what were the practical methods of carrying out their wishes. Was all that they contemplated that there should be the same communication between the different Prime Ministers of the Empire as there was between himself and M. Clemenceau and M. Orlando, on the question of peace or war?

Mr. Hughes thought that that was essential at any rate for the war. There was always the danger of peace coming suddenly, and long before Mr. Massey or himself could arrive in this country the *pourparlers* might have committed the Empire irrevocably. They might arrive, in fact, to find the principles of the League of Nations, or the Freedom of the Seas, accepted, and the Empire no longer, as a reality, in existence.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that the general idea of transferring the work of the Colonial Office to the Prime Minister at this juncture would be a fatal mistake. He thought that the routine work was very much better done by a Minister who had

specially devoted himself to the task. On the other hand, it seemed to him absurd that the Prime Ministers of the Dominions should be hampered in dealing with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom by rules as regards communicating either through the Governors-General or through the Colonial Office. He thought they would be prepared to admit that when a Prime Minister wished to communicate with the Prime Minister of this country, he might do so directly, and suggested that a small Committee might be appointed to consider the question of the best method of doing this.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies said that he had himself made proposals on the subject which he would submit to the Cabinet. No one challenged the general decision that altered circumstances demanded altered arrangements. The real difficulty lay in the actual machinery. The position of the Governors-General for instance, would be very seriously affected, and he did not think that the matter could be dealt with without much fuller consideration. He deferred the remainder of his statement until the resumed discussion.

The discussion was then adjourned.

2, *Whitehall Gardens, S.W.*
23rd July, 1918.

Printed for the Imperial War Cabinet. July 1918.

SECRET.

IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 27.

Minutes of the Twenty-seventh Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, July 25, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Right Hon. N. W. ROWELL, President of the Privy Council, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Right Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.
	Major-General His Highness SIR BHUPINDAR SINGH, Mahindar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of Patiala.

The following were also present :

General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 7).	The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 7).
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff (for Minutes 1 to 7).	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minute 8).
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 7).	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.
Mr. PHILIP KERR.	The Right Hon. the LORD NEWTON, Controller, Prisoners of War Department (for Minute 7).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. WILSON, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

Western Front.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that there was no news to report from the Western front with the exception of the small gains of yesterday, already reported in the communiqués.

With reference to future operations, General Wilson said that General Foch was undecided whether to continue his operations without reorganisation, or to cease operations for two or three days in order to reorganise and start again. General Foch had not yet received reports as to the condition of his troops, but, when he had, he would then make up his mind. Questioned as to whether General Foch had attained all that he expected, General Wilson said that, while General Foch had expected to attain more, he was content with the result of the operations.

Divisions in Reserve.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that on the whole of the German line on the Western front there were 33 entirely fresh divisions in reserve. Up to the present, 63 German divisions had been identified as having been engaged in the recent operations, and it was, of course, certain that other divisions had been engaged but not yet identified. Of the army of Prince Rupprecht, identifications had been reported of 8 divisions. In connection with any move from the north of the German force, General Wilson said that hutting had been spotted in the vicinity of Bapaume, and that there was apparently a small movement south from Lille, but that there was very little information available on this subject.

H.M.S. "Vanity."

3. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Vanity" struck a mine off the Firth of Forth on 23rd July, but had returned to harbour.

Constantinople.

4. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that a report had been received from Mudros that Constantinople had been raided by six machines on the 23rd July. Considerable damage had been done by bombs being dropped on the aerodrome, the Admiralty, and particularly the dockyard. No massing of troops had been observed.

Steamship
'Justicia.'

5. Questioned as to the protection which had been given to steamship "Justicia," the Deputy First Sea Lord said that she was in a convoy with seven other ships and protected by eight destroyers. The first torpedo struck her in the engine room, and in the course of a few hours she was further protected by destroyers, trawlers, tugs, and sloops, which surrounded her during the night. Admiral Hope pointed out that, as she was in tow and proceeding at a very slow pace, she offered a very favourable target to submarine attack after being disabled. The "Justicia" had been picked out of the convoy by the attacking submarines, which were apparently determined to sink her. One German submarine had been sunk.

The Prime Minister drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to a statement published in the press that morning which made no mention of the fact that one of the attacking submarines had been sunk. Mr. Lloyd George said that he considered that this statement should not have been passed by the Admiralty Press Censor in its incomplete form, as it was only fair to the British Navy that the sinking of the German submarine should have been made public. It was also very desirable that the Germans should realise that a ship, convoyed as steamship "Justicia" was, could not be sunk with impunity.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

The First Lord of the Admiralty should be asked to publish an official statement to the effect that one of the German submarines which participated in the attack of steamship "Justicia" had been destroyed.

The Air Situation.

6. The Chief of the Air Staff reported that he had been investigating the question of the increase in the number of German balloons destroyed by our machines. There was no change in our tactics. Our airmen, in default of finding very many aeroplanes to attack, have been attacking these balloons.

General Sykes pointed out that there is an inclination on the part of the German machines to keep well behind the line. This, when taken in conjunction with bad weather, such as we have been having recently, generally meant slight relative increase in our missing—our airmen naturally incurring a greater danger in returning in the face of the prevalent strong south-westerly wind.

Questioned with regard to any reported movement of troops, General Sykes indicated that, until yesterday, observation and reconnaissance had been much hampered by bad visibility. Yesterday the weather was better, though there was still a high wind and a certain amount of cloud. No definite movement of the enemy had been traced.

During the recent raids of the Independent Air Force no machines had been lost, although the aircraft defences on the German side had been considerably increased

Exchange of Prisoners of War. — Germans in China.

7. Lord Robert Cecil drew the attention of the Imperial War Cabinet to the reservation which the German delegates had made to the agreement with regard to the exchange of prisoners, namely, that it depended on the satisfactory settlement of the position of the Germans in China. He reminded the Imperial War Cabinet that it had been originally decided to deport all Germans in China to Australia, but subsequently, owing to the opposition of our Allies, we wished to divert the shipping required for this purpose to the transport of Czecho-Slovaks to Vancouver. This idea had been abandoned. The effect in China had been most unfortunate, as our change of policy was thought to have been due to German threats of reprisals. Since then China of its own initiative had offered to intern 120 of the most important Germans in China, either on an island or in a secluded temple, and to put the remaining 300 or 400 under special restrictions. Except the Belgians all our Allies had agreed to this proposal. If we now began to enter into negotiations with the Germans with regard to this principle they might refuse to accept anything less than being left at complete liberty in China. The Germans attached the greatest importance to their prestige and future trade in China, and this might lead them to take extreme measures, though he understood that Lord Newton considered the Germans were mainly anxious to save their face over this question. What he himself wished was to have the authorisation of the Imperial War Cabinet to go straight ahead and get the 120 Germans concerned locked up before starting negotiations with Germany about the exchange of prisoners. He quite realised that if subsequently the agreement about the prisoners broke down in consequence of this action a section of public opinion in this country might be very much upset.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that the Germans had previously threatened reprisals in this connection on civilians under their control. This would not affect us, as we had

more German civilians in our hands than they had of ours, but it might affect the Belgians, and this probably accounted for the attitude of Belgium in connection with the Chinese proposal.

Lord Newton said that he had discussed the matter confidentially with one of the German delegates, and gathered that the trouble had risen entirely from the boast which Von Kühlmann had made in the Reichstag that the negotiations at The Hague had resulted in our climbing down over the question of the Germans in China. The chief anxiety of the German Government now was to save its own face in that connection. He would be in favour of signing the agreement and then let the Germans make any further proposal they chose in regard to their own subjects in China. He thought himself if the British Government said it would not put any direct pressure for internment on China that that would satisfy Germany. The Chinese were now going to intern them in any case.

Lord Robert Cecil replied that if we made such a statement the Chinese Government would certainly not proceed with the internment.

It was suggested that the best thing in view of the future would be to repatriate the Germans to their own country, which could now be done overland. In answer to the objection that the Germans had previously rejected a suggestion to this effect, it was pointed out that they would not be in a strong position if were offered to them the alternative of internment in China or repatriation.

The Imperial War Cabinet authorised—

Lord Robert Cecil to press on with the present arrangements for the internment of Germans in China, and at the same time let it be known that we were prepared to agree to the alternative of repatriation for those who prefer it.

Channels of Communication.

8. Sir Joseph Ward, in continuing the discussion at the previous Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet (Imperial War Cabinet 26, Minute 8), said that he agreed with Sir Robert Borden that the evolution in the circumstances of the Empire necessitated a change. The overseas Dominions now represented 16 millions of people who had taken up an immense burden in connection with the war. They would number some 40 million people before long, and it was obvious that they must have a say in the foreign policy of the Empire. He agreed absolutely with Sir Robert Borden that the position which existed before the war could not possibly continue. There must be consultation, in which no doubt the United Kingdom would still retain its predominance, and in which it could count upon the loyal support of the overseas Governments. As a matter of fact, the Dominion Governments at present were in a position of having to inform their people about decisions after they had been taken. They backed up these decisions loyally in order to prevent friction, but the situation could not continue. He considered that the Dominions would have to have their voice on all questions of foreign policy, defence, and also inter-Imperial trade. He instanced more particularly as one of the questions on which Imperial consultation would be necessary after the war, the disposal of the war stocks raised by the different Governments of the Empire, including the Government of India as well as that of the overseas Dominions, during the war, and at present immobilised. If they were all let loose in competition with each other in all the markets of the Empire and of the world outside, there would be heavy depreciation, by which the Dominions would be most seriously affected. His own opinion was that it would be desirable to unify all those issues in a common Empire stock, with a single rate of interest saleable anywhere in the Empire and outside. In any case, the

matter was one which could not be settled by stray visits of Dominion Financial Ministers to London to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It involved continuous consultation. In answer to an interjection from Mr. Hughes that this involved some sort of Imperial Federation, Sir Joseph Ward said that he did not necessarily imply that. No one could now reasonably decide what could be done in the future. That question would have to be settled calmly and dispassionately at a subsequent date. At present the war came before anything else.

As regards the actual measures required during the war to improve Imperial consultation, he doubted if any one man could carry out the combined duties already devolving upon the Prime Minister which might be involved in the resolution passed by the Imperial War Conference. He associated himself with what had been said by others about the good work of the Colonial Office, and thought that if a separate Ministry was required for Dominion business, the Secretary of State for the Colonies might as well carry on as before. In his opinion, the only way in which the wishes and aspirations of the Dominions could be met at the present time would be by permanent representation on the Imperial War Cabinet. The few weeks for which the Imperial War Cabinet met at the present were not sufficient. In the interval vital matters were settled, and all the Dominions could do was to say "yes" afterwards. This was unavoidable under the existing conditions, but no one could say that it was satisfactory. He pointed out that, since the last Imperial War Cabinet had met, the British Government had had to make very different decisions with regard to which its conduct of affairs had been scrutinised since the Imperial War Cabinet had reassembled. Then again there was such a question as that of the unity of control of the Allied forces. The Dominions had all been in favour of that, but the British Government had had to deal with certain difficulties in introducing that policy, and it might have helped to an earlier solution of that difficult problem if it had been able to say that the Dominion Governments were in favour of that policy, and that it was, in fact, an Empire policy. His suggestion was that each of the Dominion Prime Ministers should leave a Minister permanently here when he went back. This would make the voice of the Dominions in Imperial affairs a reality. Their voice was only a reality when a Minister was actually present in the War Cabinet. This would also greatly help to solve the question of channels of communication, because the Prime Ministers could then telegraph direct to their own colleagues in this country, who would be empowered to bring the matter forward before the War Cabinet, or to confer on it with the Prime Minister. He considered this suggestion of Ministerial representation during the war and the period of reconstruction immediately after the war as the best temporary bridge that could be devised. Otherwise he was not in favour of any drastic changes until the matter could be fully considered.

Mr. Rowell pointed out that the keynote of the whole discussion had been frank recognition of the equality of status between the different nations of the Empire as the basis of any solution. The question of any permanent reconstruction he assumed would be left until after the war, in accordance with the resolution of the previous year's Imperial Conference. He thought that would commend itself to public opinion in Canada, which felt that the undivided energies of the Governments of the Empire should be devoted to the actual conduct of the war. But this did not imply that nothing need be done in order to improve the existing channels of communication. What General Smuts had suggested was that the matter should be left over and not be dealt with piece-meal. But he wished to draw attention to one partial step which had been actually taken during the war, namely, the assembling of the Imperial War Cabinet, which

had undoubtedly been useful. The time had come, in his opinion, for a further step to improve the existing situation, and to meet in some measure the legitimate sentiments of the Dominions. Their national sentiment to-day was stronger than ever before, and should receive some expression consistent with the unity of the Empire. He suggested that the status of the Governors-General had largely changed as a matter of practice, and urged that the change should now be frankly recognised, and that the Governors-General should no longer act as a channel of communication with the Colonial Office, but should be confined to their position as representatives of the Sovereign. That would not involve any action beyond the decision of the Imperial War Cabinet, and a communication to the Governors-General to that effect. With regard to the actual method of communication, he thought that there was a distinct difference between the class of questions which affect issues of war and peace, such as were in fact dealt by the Imperial War Cabinet, and such questions as were discussed at the Imperial Conference, or dealt with in the ordinary course of business communications between the Dominion Governments and the Colonial Office. He saw no reason why communications of the first class, namely, those dealing with Imperial War Cabinet matters, should not be between Prime Minister and Prime Minister, the British Prime Minister using the existing secretariat of the Imperial War Cabinet for that purpose, even if communications on other classes of subjects remained as at present.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies expressed his grateful appreciation of the references which had been made to the great Department with which he was connected. As regards the changes which had been advocated, they were based, not on any alleged shortcomings of the Colonial Office, but on a great central fact of Empire, namely, that the oversea Dominions were free nations with an absolute control of their own affairs, which entitled them to a different status from that which they had hitherto held. If he offered anything which appeared in the nature of criticism, this was not because there was not in the Colonial Office any *non possumus* or factious attitude towards the change. Their one desire was, if possible, to meet the demand which had been put forward, and, above all, to strengthen the foundations of the Empire and to expedite its business.

The proposals which had been made fell under two main heads, firstly, those which affected the permanent rearrangement of the British Government, and secondly, those concerned with the immediate means for securing direct communication between the Prime Ministers of the Empire.

With regard to the first set of proposals, he believed that the time had come when such changes would have to be made. They would have to be considered by the British Government, as they involved changes in its own constitution and methods. He had not put forward any proposals himself, but though he was quite ready to put his views on paper if desired. He agreed with General Smuts that the wider question could not be settled now, least of all, at two or three discussions of the Imperial War Cabinet. If the Prime Minister thought it desirable to appoint a small committee, under, say, Lord Curzon as Chairman, to consider these matters, he would be very willing to serve on it, and the results might then be laid before the Imperial War Cabinet. As regards the minor questions of communication, he agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had the most recent experience of Colonial Office administration, as his predecessor, that within certain limits, which should be clearly defined, there was no reason why there should not be direct communication between the Dominion Prime Ministers and the British Prime Minister. There was in fact nothing to prevent it now except an idea that the Colonial Secretary might possibly feel hurt. He assured them

that there would be no such feeling as far as he himself was concerned. It was necessary, however, for him to consider the position of the British Prime Minister in the matter. It was not always realised in the Dominions that there was only one Colonial Secretary to five Governors-General of the Dominions, that every mail brought a very large number of communications. It was necessary to find some way of seeing that the work could really be done, and that the Prime Minister's control should be real and not nominal. Communications came in not only on matters of common co-operation, but there were complaints and criticisms of different departments which the Colonial Office tried to accommodate. There must be someone to examine the cases generally, and to advise the Prime Minister. However, he agreed that the matter was one for the Prime Minister to decide for himself. He was, however, obliged to put before the Imperial War Cabinet what he considered the most important aspect of this question of direct communication, namely, the effect upon the position of the Governors-General. He admitted the position had no doubt changed greatly in practice, but he did not think it would be fair to the Governors-General to come to any conclusion on this matter without communicating with them more fully than was possible by cable, which he had already done, in order to give them an opportunity of stating their own views. He did not say that the Governors-General would be opposed to the proposed change in their position, but he thought that they should be consulted.

Sir Robert Borden pointed out that the British Government in communicating with the Dominion Governments did not communicate through the King. If there was to be absolute equality of status that course would be the logical correlative to the present system of communication with the Dominions through the Governors-General.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies pointed out that the Governors-General were the representatives of His Majesty's Government as well as of the Sovereign.

Mr. Hughes replied that if His Majesty's Government avowedly did not profess to exercise a control over the policy of the Dominion Governments, there was no reason for the Governors-General to occupy this dual position.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies agreed, and expressed the view that he considered the change inevitable in the end, but urged that the Governors-General should be consulted, as their position would be undeniably affected. He suggested the Imperial War Cabinet should make up its mind as to the precise nature of the changes which they wished to see carried out in this respect and embody them in a despatch to be sent to the Governors-General.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that, leaving aside the great problem of future reorganisation, there were two questions :—

- (i.) Whether communication between the Dominion Governments and the British Government should go through the Governors-General or direct? And,
- (ii.) If direct, should it go from Prime Minister to Prime Minister or through the Colonial Office?

As regards the first point, he was quite clear personally that the system of communication through the Governors-General was doomed, and belonged to a past epoch. As regards the second question, which he considered of less importance, the Colonial Secretary's well-founded criticism might, in his opinion, be met with an expedient not unknown in foreign affairs. The Prime Minister frequently communicated with Allied Prime Ministers direct, and not through the Foreign Office orthodox channels. He saw no reason why the Prime Ministers of the Dominions should not communicate with the Prime Minister on important matters when they

wanted to do so, it being understood that communications normally went through the established machinery of the Colonial Office.

In answer to a suggestion from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Prime Minister also sometimes wanted to correspond with another Allied Prime Minister quite privately, Mr. Balfour said that, while not objecting to that, he did not think it desirable that this should occur too often.

Lord Curzon pointed out that in India the Viceroy was not merely the representative of the Sovereign, but also in the position of the Prime Minister of the Government. As such, his normal channel of correspondence with the British Government was through the Secretary of State for India. But there were cases when he might wish to communicate with the Prime Minister directly. When he had been Viceroy he had, on several occasions, communicated directly with Lord Salisbury or with Mr. Balfour in that way, and no one had contested his right to do so. There was no question of going behind the back of the Secretary of State for India. He knew for a fact that his letters would be shown to the Secretary of State in every case. He saw no difficulty about the same procedure being adopted in the case of the Dominions. There might be cases of importance in which the Prime Ministers of the Dominions would correspond with the British Prime Minister directly, and in those cases the latter would naturally put himself in touch with the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. Churchill expressed the hope that the larger question of Imperial reconstruction would not be regarded as unattainable or not worth discussing at the present moment. It was an urgent and vital necessity that could not be passed by. The great nations which composed the Empire could not be pushed this way or that way in future in matters which concerned either war policy or war preparations. The revolution which the war had caused carried that with it. He realised the immense difficulties in dealing with the question during the war, but he realised equally the difficulties in the way of dealing with it in time of peace. Having some experience as a party politician himself he was certain that in the United Kingdom the difficulties in the way of dealing with the question would be infinitely greater when peace had come. There would be acute party struggles, and the Opposition would strongly object to any prestige which the Government in office might acquire by its association with the Dominion Governments. The whole question would pass into the area of controversy with all its difficulties unsolved. He thought it would be the greatest danger to the Empire if we came out of the war without settling this question. The metal was now molten and could be moulded. He agreed with the Colonial Secretary that it was desirable to investigate the question at once.

Meanwhile, the first step to be taken was a purely practical one. It was necessary to put the machinery of the Imperial War Cabinet on a permanent basis, so that the common policy of the Empire should not pass completely out of the control of the Dominions for the months which intervened between two sessions. He thought it was perfectly simple for the Prime Minister of each Dominion to select a second Minister, one whom he regarded as next in importance to himself, who could be in this country when the Prime Minister himself returned to his Dominion. The Imperial War Cabinet could then continue, not necessarily with such frequency as during the present period of most active session, but, at any rate, at frequent intervals. In this way nine-tenths of the present difficulties could be got over.

The Prime Minister considered that this had been one of the most important debates that had ever taken place in the Imperial War Cabinet. It affected the future relations and the future efficiency of the Empire. He entirely agreed with Sir Robert Borden that it is quite impossible that the Empire could continue

on the basis of the United Kingdom deciding the policy and the Dominions joining in the bill. There were two questions before them, one that of the arrangements which could be made during the war, which might be tentative and experimental, the other that of permanent arrangements for the future. With regard to the first, the discussion had ranged round two proposals. The least important of the two, though by no means insignificant, was the proposal that the Dominion Prime Ministers should have the right to correspond directly with their opposite number in the United Kingdom. That right was not challenged, and he did not see how it could be challenged. Since the war there had been a new method of communication between the Allied Governments of Europe, namely, that between the Heads of Governments directly as regards the conduct of the war. He recognised no limit of his right to correspond with M. Clemenceau or M. Orlando, and had in fact corresponded regularly both with the two Prime Ministers referred to and with M. Clemenceau's predecessors, M. Painlevé and M. Ribot. The men who had the supreme responsibility had not only a right but a duty to communicate with each other, and the more closely they kept in touch the better. As far as method was concerned, these communications sometimes went through the Foreign Office, sometimes through the French Embassy, at other times by direct messengers. The subject-matter of these communications referred even more often to War Office questions than to Foreign Office questions. In each case he communicated them at once to the Departments concerned. Surely the same principle must apply to the Dominions, both as regards the conduct of the war and also in reference to questions of peace. There should be the freest communication between those who were in supreme charge of the destinies of the Dominions and the Prime Minister of this country. He agreed that, as the Secretary of State for the Colonies had said, there had existed a sort of feeling that such direct communication might interfere with the susceptibilities of the Governors-General or of the Colonial Office. He thought it should be clearly understood that there should be the same communication between the Prime Ministers of the Empire as between the Prime Ministers of the Alliance. He then read to the Imperial War Cabinet the following Resolution :—

- (1.) The Prime Ministers of the Dominions, as members of the Imperial War Cabinet, have the right of direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and *vice versa*.
- (2.) Such communications should be confined to questions of Cabinet importance. The Prime Ministers themselves are the judges of such questions.
- (3.) Telegraphic communications between the Prime Ministers should, as a rule, be conducted through the Colonial Office machinery, but this will not exclude the adoption of more direct means of communication in exceptional circumstances.

The second and more important proposal was that dealing with the machinery for consultation during the war. He agreed as to the incompleteness of the present arrangements. The Imperial War Cabinet had made a marked and very distinct advance in Imperial co-operation and consultation. But it was incomplete. In the previous year it had met for two months and discussed very vital questions. But for his own part he would have preferred it to have met in the autumn because some most important questions arose then, such as the offensive in Flanders, which had the most important consequences for every part of the Empire, with regard to which he should like to have had the views of the Dominion

Prime Ministers. Subsequently there had been various semi-official advances with regard to peace, and again the great question of unity of command. All these matters were vital, and there had been no means of communicating with regard to them. He asked them to contemplate what might happen when they now dispersed. When the German offensive had finally failed, the Germans would come forward with proposals which might conceivably be worth consideration. He was quite clear that the Dominions should be consulted as to the steps to be taken in that case. Then, again, the Dominions would be vitally affected by the decision of next year's campaign. There were many other points of first-class importance with regard to which it would be a great strength to the British Government to have the views of the Dominions. He did not think that the Imperial War Cabinet should separate on this occasion without deciding to adopt some measure by which it might be possible to secure continuous consultation. The suggestion had been made that the Dominions should appoint a Minister who could express their views, and who would be available to attend meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet. Those might take place once a week or once a fortnight, or more often if pressure of business demanded it. He considered that this suggestion would enable the sittings of the Imperial War Cabinet to be continuous, and would thus provide a means of consultation on the most important questions of common interest.

As regards the wider question of the permanent machinery of Imperial organisation, he agreed with Mr. Churchill that it would be easier to set up some machinery during the war than after. That had been the experience of the German Empire, which had been set up in the heat and warmth of a great victory. He feared that after the war we should all be so much absorbed with the needs of reconstruction in industry, in finance, and with regard to labour that he almost doubted our ability to concentrate on the question of Imperial co-operation. He would therefore strongly deprecate the suggestion that the constitution of the permanent machinery should be postponed until after the war. So much had been achieved for mankind, through the assistance of the British Empire, that it would be a disaster for humanity, as a whole, if the Empire fell to pieces after the war. He would therefore suggest that steps should be taken now, not indeed to set up machinery, but for the careful consideration of this question of machinery, so that when the Imperial War Cabinet met again in the following year, or before, they would have available the judgment of the men whom they had deputed to investigate and study the subject. He invited the members of the Imperial War Cabinet to think out the best method of investigating the problem. It might be possible to set up a Committee of men of knowledge and experience, who, with the guidance of high authorities on constitutional questions, might go into the matter at leisure, and produce a report in time to send it out to the Dominions before the Prime Ministers came back for the next session.

Mr. Hughes considered that the Prime Minister's first suggestion as to direct communication was most satisfactory, and would serve. With regard to the second suggestion, he thought the weak point of the proposal was that no one could speak with final authority except the Prime Ministers. Other Ministers could only represent the Prime Ministers. He therefore urged that, in any case, before the Prime Ministers separated on the present occasion they should arrive at a clear basis with regard to the attitude of the Imperial War Cabinet towards peace terms and the general conduct of the war.

With regard to the third suggestion, he considered that if a Committee were set up in this country to discuss and devise a scheme of Imperial Federation, Australia would not have anything to do with it.

The Prime Minister pointed out that his suggestion did not imply a scheme of Imperial Federation, but only the consideration of the machinery for conducting the business of the Empire in future.

Mr. Hughes suggested that Australia had not been prepared to adopt its own constitution without a referendum, and would be suspicious of any body that proposed to discuss the future constitution of the Empire. It would at once be said that Australia's freedom was being bartered away. He doubted whether, from the Australian point of view at any rate, this was the best time for dealing with the matter. A plebiscite of the Australian soldiers at the front at this moment would be overwhelming against such a proposal. He had discussed the matter in all the Governments of which he had been a member in Australia. He agreed that the present position was impossible and rotten. He thought that the view of the Australian people would be that, if Australian representatives were sent to a Council of Empire, they would be entangled and doubly committed if a war broke out, and that the last state would, in fact, be worse than the first.

Sir Robert Borden admitted that a similar view was also held in certain sections in Canada. Sir W. Laurier had always taken up that attitude. He himself had disagreed. He would himself sooner go out of the Empire altogether than adopt this attitude. If he stayed in the Empire it was on condition that he had a voice in the conduct of its affairs.

Mr. Hughes agreed with that point of view, but asked the Prime Minister to re-state his idea.

The Prime Minister said that what he had in his mind was only a committee to investigate the machinery for carrying on the business of the Empire after the war. There were such questions as foreign treaties, the co-operation of the different armies and navies of the Empire, with regard to which he considered that a committee might now be set up to investigate and report to the Imperial War Cabinet in time for the Dominion Prime Ministers to receive it before they came to the next meeting.

Mr. Hughes did not consider the case for the proposed Committee had been satisfactorily made out. The Australian Government could always consult the Admiralty or the War Office. As regards treaties, at any rate commercial treaties, they were only bound after they had assented to them. He wished to make it clear that he was not expressing his personal opinions, but those of Australia. He thought that if the proposal were made public it would cause trouble in Australia, where there was only a narrow span between those who stood for the Empire and those who were in favour of disruption.

General Smuts thought there was nothing in the Prime Minister's proposal which was not really implied in the second part of Mr. Hughes' own resolution. He agreed, however, that the announcement of a Committee sitting to study the constitution of the Empire would not only have a bad effect in Australia, but elsewhere. In his opinion the third proposal could best be regarded in the light of the proposal made with regard to Imperial representation. He suggested that the Dominion Ministers who were left to represent their Governments in this country could join with other members of the War Cabinet informally, without constituting a formal Committee, announced to the world as such, and thresh out those problems at leisure.

Sir Robert Borden saw no difficulty in the suggestion with regard to resident Ministers. Canada had already a Minister in this country, and could either extend his powers, or, if necessary, appoint another. As far as the third proposal made by the Prime Minister went, he did not think it desirable to set up a formal Committee. Such a step might be misconstrued in Canada, where there was general satisfaction with the resolution passed at the

Imperial War Conference last year. Nevertheless, there was a great advantage in doing something in the meantime and making preparations for the Constitutional Conference contemplated by that resolution. Unless there was proper preparation there could be no good results. He thought the question should be taken into further consideration.

(The discussion was adjourned until Tuesday, 30th July.)

*2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
July 25, 1918.*

SECRET.

IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 28.

Minutes of the Twenty-eighth Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, July 30, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	Colonel the Hon. C. C. BALLANTYNE, Minister of Naval Service, and Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. Sir G. CAVE, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bart., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. E. S. MONTAGU, M.P., Secretary of State for India.	The Right Hon. H. BURTON, K.C., Minister of Railways and Harbours, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
	The Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.

The following were also present :

Admiral Sir R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.	The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 8).	The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
General SIR H. H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff.	The Right Hon. LORD NEWTON, Controller, Prisoners of War Department (for Minutes 5 to 8).
Major-General SIR G. M. W. MACDONOGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.	Mr. J. F. HOPE, Prisoners of War Department (for Minutes 5 to 8).
Lieutenant-General SIR C. F. N. MACREADY, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., Adjutant-General to the Forces (for Minutes 5 to 8).	Lieutenant-General SIR H. E. BELFIELD, K.C.B., D.S.O., Director of Prisoners of War Department (for Minutes 5 to 8).
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff.	Mr. H. C. M. LAMBERT, C.B., Colonial Office.
Captain H. K. KITSON, R.N., Admiralty (for Minutes 5 to 8).	Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.
Mr. THOMAS JONES, *Assistant Secretary*.
Captain L. F. BURGIS, *Assistant Secretary*.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

The Western
Front.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that one more division from Prince Rupprecht's army had been identified on the German battle front, making a total of nine. This left twenty-seven fresh divisions on the whole German front, of which twenty-one were with Prince Rupprecht. During the counter-offensive four British and seven American divisions had been engaged. The total number of prisoners taken from the enemy was probably not far short of 30,000. The Germans were putting up a very good fight during their retreat.

Air Operations :
Imbros.
Attack on
Aerodrome.

2. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that an air attack was made on Sunday, the 28th July, on R.A.F. aerodrome, Imbros, resulting in the total destruction of one Bessoneau hangar and the seven Sopwith Camels it contained. There were no casualties.

Constantinople.

3. The attention of the Imperial War Cabinet was called to the desirability of carrying on bombing operations on Constantinople.

The Chief of the Air Staff said that it had been decided to strengthen the units at Mudros for this work.

Man Power :
Munition Workers'
Strike.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 451, Minute 11, the Minister of Munitions reported that the strike among the munition workers against the embargo on the employment of skilled men was at an end, and the Government Committee appointed to enquire into the best method of working the embargo would meet on the following day. The strike was remarkable, not only as showing the great power of public opinion, but also the influence exercised by discharged sailors and soldiers in bringing the strike to a speedy end.

The Prime Minister, in congratulating the Minister of Munitions, said that a noticeable feature of the industrial situation was the increasing cleavage between the skilled and unskilled workers.

Exchange of
Prisoners of War.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 445, Minute 6, the Imperial War Cabinet had before them an Agreement arrived at between delegates of the British and German Governments concerning the exchange of combatant prisoners of war and civilians (Paper G.-219), which now required to be ratified by the Government in order to be put into effect.

The Prime Minister asked whether there was any doubt about the desirability of ratifying this Agreement.

The First Sea Lord said that the Admiralty had one very important objection, inasmuch as in Article 2 there was a clause missing, which related to the exchange of submarine officers and crews. The missing clause provided that there should be no such exchange.

Sir George Cave explained that the exception was in the original draft, but he was informed that, by a printer's error, it had been dropped out, and steps were being taken to rectify the omission. The Agreement (without this exception) had, however, been signed by the delegates of both countries, and there was a possibility of the Germans denying that the omission was a mistake.

Some doubt was expressed as to whether it would be possible for the British Government to refuse their sanction to an Agreement which the British delegates had signed, if the Germans insisted that this clause had not been left out in error. In particular, it was pointed out that it would be extremely difficult to defend in Parliament a refusal, based on these grounds, to ratify the Agreement. It was explained that there were only twenty-five German submarine officers in Holland to whom this clause applied. The

First Sea Lord pointed out, however, that the German submarine officers were very highly trained men, and Germany would gain a tremendous advantage if her captured officers were enabled to return and train others in this very technical work. The relative success we had achieved in our anti-submarine campaign was to a great extent due to the lack of training of a large part of the crews of German submarines, and consequently the return of twenty-five experienced submarine officers, available as instructors, would exercise an effect out of all proportion to their numbers.

The Imperial War Cabinet took note of the First Sea Lord's serious objection to the ratification of the Agreement unless the correction referred to was made. Inasmuch, however, as very large questions of policy and considerable Parliamentary difficulties are involved in a proposal to destroy, by refusing to ratify, an Agreement which has been actually signed, they considered that, if the protest is to be pressed, it must be made formally by the First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

- (a.) The Hague Prisoners Agreement should be ratified on the understanding that the portion of article 2 relating to submarine prisoners, which had been omitted by a printer's error, should be restored.
- (b.) The correction of this printer's error should not be pressed to the point of our declining to ratify the Agreement if the enemy could not be induced to admit the error.

6 The Director of Military Intelligence then raised the question of the ill-treatment of our men by the Germans because they refused to do certain work which they regarded as not distinctly connected with the operations of war. Although this question was not directly connected with the Agreement under discussion, he thought that the phrase "work connected with the operations of war" should be more distinctly defined.

Some discussion followed as to the meaning of this phrase, and it was generally agreed that, in these days, it was very difficult to find any work for prisoners of war which was not connected with the war.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

- (a.) As this question was not directly connected with the Agreement, it should be dealt with as a separate question.
- (b.) The Director of Military Intelligence should prepare a memorandum, endeavouring to define more precisely the meaning of the phrase "work connected with the operations of war," and should place himself in communication with the Prisoners of War Department, with a view to concerting such action as might be deemed expedient and practicable.

Treatment of
British Prisoners
of War
in Germany and
Holland.

7. The Imperial War Cabinet had before them notes of statements and suggestions made by Miss Vulliamy regarding the treatment of British prisoners of war in Germany and Holland (G.T.-5083), and a memorandum by Sir George Cave (Paper G.T.-5135) on the same subject.

Sir George Cave stated that Miss Vulliamy's suggestion No. 1 would have been met by the suggestion made at the Hague that 15,000 privates should be first exchanged, but he understood that this had been given up at the request of the Dutch Government. Miss Vulliamy's suggestions Nos. 2 to 4 would be met if the Hague Agreement were ratified by the Government.

With regard to suggestion No. 5 (b), in which it was suggested that we should use German officer prisoners, and especially those of aristocratic connections, as a lever through which to get proper

treatment for our own privates, the Prime Minister said that this raised a very difficult question, and he thought it should be very seriously considered.

Sir Robert Borden stated that he had recently interviewed a certain number of Canadian officers who had returned from prisoner camps in Germany. These officers had assured him that it was useless for us in this country to practise severity against the German rank and file, but that if we retaliated on their officers, especially officers of the German aristocracy, there would be very different results. The treatment of our officers and men in some of the German prisoner camps amounted to slow assassination. He admitted that we could not compete with the Germans in brutality, but he thought that we should do something to stiffen the treatment of the German nobility.

The Prime Minister said that Germany might reply that we were deliberately starving their country, and that therefore they could not undertake to feed prisoners of war better than their own population. There had been a great outcry in this country when people imagined that German prisoners of war were being fed more sumptuously than the civilian population.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

Lord Robert Cecil, with the assistance of Lord Newton and Sir Robert Borden, should investigate this subject and prepare a memorandum with any suggestions they might arrive at, for submission to the Imperial War Cabinet.

With regard to Miss Vulliamy's suggestion No. 6, that a food expert should be sent by the Government to Holland to look into the entire food situation and to improve the working of the existing contract, Lord Milner stated that the War Office had already taken up this question.

The Adjutant-General said there were two propositions: First, that the existing contract with the Dutch firm should be broken; secondly, that the Quartermaster-General should arrange to send over bully beef and biscuits to supplement the present rations of our prisoners. The Adjutant-General had heard that morning that the Quartermaster-General would be able to arrange this, provided the Secretary of State for War approved.

The Imperial War Cabinet took note of the steps the War Office had taken in this direction, but requested—

The Secretary of State for War to see that a suitable man, with the necessary experience, was sent out to Holland to endeavour to improve the working of the existing contract with the Dutch firm.

With regard to Miss Vulliamy's suggestion No. 7, that the British Government should make themselves directly responsible for the development of industries in which all British prisoners of war in Holland could be employed, it was stated that the Red Cross had undertaken this work in Switzerland, and that their efforts had met with considerable success. It was suggested that Major Mitchell, who had undertaken this work, should proceed to Holland and endeavour to organise the Red Cross work in that country on the same lines as he had organised it in Switzerland.

The Imperial War Cabinet approved this suggestion, and directed—

General Belfield to approach Major Mitchell, and request him to undertake this work in Holland.

With regard to Miss Vulliamy's suggestion No. 8, that women should be sent over in greater numbers to Holland, Sir George Cave said that he thought it should be possible to institute a system of leave, by which prisoners could come over to this country in larger numbers.

It was also stated that it might be possible to increase the number of women sent out to Holland under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. and as V.A.D.'s, the present number of women going out in this capacity being very limited.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that, if the agreement now under consideration was ratified, the acute difficulty in regard to men who had long been interned in Holland would not arise, and it was suggested that, in these circumstances, it was hardly worth while to devote tonnage for this object. It was explained, however, that the men from Germany, taking the places of those sent home from Holland, would still be affected.

The Imperial War Cabinet directed—

The War Office, in consultation with the Admiralty, to endeavour to provide greater facilities for women going out to Holland.

8. The attention of the Imperial War Cabinet was called to the possibility of great discontent being caused if a preponderance of officers were returned to this country before the N.C.O.'s and men.

In this connection it was pointed out that the Dutch Government had insisted that all officers and men in Holland should be evacuated to England before a further consignment of prisoners was received from Germany.

Lord Newton said that, as there were now in Holland only 700 officers compared to 5,300 N.C.O.'s and privates, he did not think the public could imagine that the N.C.O.'s and men were receiving less consideration than the officers.

While accepting this view, the Imperial War Cabinet were of opinion, however, that it would nevertheless be advisable to give publicity to the demands of the Dutch Government in this respect, and they directed—

Lord Newton to take the necessary action at an opportune moment.

Channels of
Communication
between the
Dominions and the
United Kingdom.

9. In continuation of previous discussions (Imperial War Cabinet 26, Minute 8, and Imperial War Cabinet 27, Minute 8), the Imperial War Cabinet considered the following three draft resolutions, which had been circulated by the Prime Minister as a basis for discussion:—

I.—(1.) The Prime Ministers of the Dominions, as members of the Imperial War Cabinet, have the right of direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and *vice versa*.

(2.) Such communications should be confined to questions of Cabinet importance. The Prime Ministers themselves are the judges of such questions.

(3.) Telegraphic communications between the Prime Ministers should, as a rule, be conducted through the Colonial Office machinery, but this will not exclude the adoption of more direct means of communication in exceptional circumstances.

II.—In order to secure continuity in the work of the Imperial War Cabinet and a permanent means of consultation during the war on the more important questions of common interest, the Prime Minister of each Dominion has the right to nominate a Cabinet Minister either as a resident or visitor in London to represent him at meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet to be held regularly between the plenary sessions.

III.—These representatives of the Dominions, together with other members nominated by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, should meet as an informal Committee to investigate the machinery for carrying on the business of the Empire after the war.

Sir Robert Borden informed the Imperial War Cabinet that the Dominion Prime Ministers, with the exception of Mr. Lloyd, who had been out of London, had held a meeting on the previous day to discuss these proposals, and had arrived at the following conclusions. The first proposal seemed to them only to embody what had already been practically decided upon. As regards the second proposal, they could see no reason why it should not be carried out, and were prepared to accept it. As regards the third proposal, while fully appreciating the necessity of consideration in advance of the Imperial problem, and of informal consultation on the question, they were not prepared to agree in the desirability of setting up even an informal Committee. The whole question was, in accordance with the Resolution passed by last year's Imperial War Conference, to come before a Constitutional Conference after the war. The exact composition and powers of that Conference, whether it would meet with plenary or more limited powers, or merely for consideration and report, was not yet settled. Before it met, the subject would, no doubt, be freely discussed in the different Parliaments and in the Press, and might most usefully form the subject-matter of informal consultation between the Governments. But if any Committee, even the informal Committee suggested in the third proposal, were set up, the fact would inevitably become public, and the different Governments would continually become involved in explanations as to what that Committee was not intended to do. In the end, as one of his colleagues had remarked, the public would begin to ask: "What the devil the Committee was intended to do?"

Mr. Hughes said that his views coincided, in the main, with Sir Robert Borden's. He thought there was a distinct danger in setting up such a Committee, and felt sure it would do more harm than good.

Mr. Massey said that he agreed with the first proposal, although he intended, in ordinary circumstances, to continue following the normal procedure of communication through the Governor-General and the Colonial Office. As regards the second proposal, he felt certain that the public in the United Kingdom and in the Dominions, which had approved of the summoning of the Imperial War Cabinet, would approve of this further step. New Zealand would certainly greatly appreciate the privilege of being able to send a Minister, either permanently or on a visit, to take part in these regular Meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet, even if, at the moment, it was not in a position to make use of it. He wished to repeat what he had said on a previous occasion, that representation for this purpose must be by an actual Cabinet Minister. No High Commissioner could represent his Government for that purpose, although conceivably the Cabinet Minister resident in London might also carry out a High Commissioner's duties. As regards the third proposal and the question which underlay it, he wished to emphasise that, while in favour of the closest possible union, he was opposed to Imperial Federation. It was just because he was an ardent Imperialist that he was so opposed, for the present, at any rate. Imperial Federation meant an Imperial Parliament and a right to levy taxes. New Zealand, loyal as it was, would never consent to be taxed by a Parliament outside its own boundaries. That was the practical fact, however admirable in theory a common Parliament and common taxes might be. To attempt to enforce Imperial Federation at the present time would only involve a repetition of the Boston Tea Party. Not that he was afraid of any infringement of Dominion autonomy involved in closer union. "Autonomy," with some people, was, like "Mesopotamia," a blessed

word. There was no questioning of the autonomy of the Dominions, but only a question of their right to have a share in the framing of the foreign policy and defence policy of the Empire. He was convinced that in this matter it was desirable to go slowly. One rash step might postpone development for years.

General Smuts thought that Sir Robert Borden had stated the conclusions of the Dominions very fairly. In his opinion, the really important step was involved in the second proposal. With regard to this, the Dominions felt that the decision now taken should not be put before the public as a new departure, but rather as a matter of course, a natural development of a policy which had already been accepted in principle. With regard to the third proposal, he thought that very useful work might be done in studying the problem of the Imperial Constitution without the creation of a Committee.

Mr. Lloyd, while agreeing with his Dominion colleagues as regards the second and third proposals, wished to be quite clear as to the meaning of the first proposal: did it mean that, in the normal course, correspondence between the Dominions and the United Kingdom Government went through the Governors-General to the Colonial Office, as in the past, and that in abnormal circumstances it would in future go to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, either through the existing machinery of the Governors-General and Colonial Office or directly?

It was generally agreed that this was so.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies said he could not help expressing the honest regret of himself and of his colleagues in the Colonial Office that these alterations had been passed so rapidly, and that more time had not been taken to consider them. He was in some difficulty as to what the future procedure was to be, and what alternative telegraphic machinery was to be employed to that already in existence.

Sir Robert Borden explained that he had occasionally telegraphed either through the Governor-General or through the High Commissioner. In the latter case he had always, as a matter of courtesy, informed the Governor-General of his action.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies said that the effect the change would have on the position of the Governors-General and the Colonial Secretary would depend very much on how it worked out in practice. For himself, and for the Governors-General, whose interests he represented as a Minister, all he could say was that he believed they could loyally accept the Cabinet decision as he did, but they and he must reserve their absolute freedom of action; so much must depend on the interpretation given to, and the use made of, the new conditions that they and he must not be bound by the decision arrived at to-day, but must be free to take such action as they thought fit when they knew from experience what the result had been.

For the Governors-General he could say with certainty that some of them viewed the change with considerable perturbation.

Mr. Hughes thought that things would work out without difficulty in practice. After all, it was very rarely that a Prime Minister was not on intimate terms with the Governor-General. His own experience had been that, so far from being hampered by the Governor-General, he had always had the machinery of Government House freely at his disposal. In communicating directly, in future, as proposed, he would naturally ask his Governor-General whether he had any objection, and, equally naturally, the Governor-General would put his cypher at his disposal.

Mr. Montagu pointed out that, as the actual wording of the second proposal stood at present, there was no provision for the representation of India at the future meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet in the intervals between the plenary sessions. He assumed that this was not the intention, but he had no proposals to make at the moment. He would wish to consult the Viceroy.

The Prime Minister assented, and asked him to submit proposals later.

The Prime Minister thought that the announcement which Sir Robert Borden had made very fairly met the wishes of the British section of the Imperial War Cabinet. He quite understood the difficulties which the Dominion Representatives had experienced with regard to the third proposal. He realised that the public opinion of the Dominions was naturally apprehensive lest anything should be done at this end to impinge on their freedom and independence of action. There was, of course, no real danger of the British Government repeating the mistake committed with regard to the American Colonies; it was not often that so cardinal an error could be committed twice over where the punishment had been so sharp. He agreed, however, that it was not desirable to press the third proposal, more particularly as the first two, in substance, gave all that was necessary to cover the third. The first two would, in fact, see us through the present war; and if the system thus set in operation justified itself during the war, as, indeed, it had already done so far, it would probably also cover the period after the war. In any case, he was clear that the Dominions, which had already done so much in the common cause, had a right to a say in the settlement of this particular dispute and of all possible future disputes. As regards the first proposal, he quite agreed that the direct communication there indicated was not to be the normal regular machinery. On the other hand, if, for instance, a Dominion Minister wished to communicate with the British Government on such matters as had formed the subject of Sir Robert Borden's opening remarks at the present session of the Imperial War Cabinet, he thought that was clearly a case for direct communication to the Prime Minister.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies agreed.

The Prime Minister added that, with regard to the second proposal, he entirely shared the view expressed by Mr. Massey, that only a Cabinet Minister in touch with his own Government would be a suitable representative at meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet.

Sir Robert Borden and Mr. Hughes remarked that this went without saying.

Subject to the representation of India under Resolution II being settled between the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for India, and the Viceroy, the Imperial War Cabinet accepted the following resolutions submitted by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom:—

- I.—(1.) The Prime Ministers of the Dominions, as members of the Imperial War Cabinet, have the right of direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and *vice versa*.
 - (2.) Such communications should be confined to questions of Cabinet importance. The Prime Ministers themselves are the judges of such questions.
 - (3.) Telegraphic communications between the Prime Ministers should, as a rule, be conducted through the Colonial Office machinery, but this will not exclude the adoption of more direct means of communication in exceptional circumstances.
- II.—In order to secure continuity in the work of the Imperial War Cabinet and a permanent means of consultation during the war on the more important questions of common interest, the Prime Minister of each Dominion has the right to nominate a Cabinet Minister either as a resident or visitor in London to represent him at meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet to be held regularly between the plenary Sessions.
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Allied Intervention
in Russia.

10. A short discussion on this subject was raised by Mr. Hughes, who pointed out the extreme difficulty of the situation, as shown, on the one hand, by Mr. Lockhart's messages urging that intervention, if not carried out at once, would be too late, and, on the other, by President Wilson's delays.

Future Business.

11. The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

The Committee of Prime Ministers should meet on Wednesday morning, July 31, at 11.30, to consider the Report of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff on Future Policy.

2, *Whitehall Gardens, S.W.*,
July 30, 1918.

Printed for the Imperial War Cabinet. August 1918.

SECRET.

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IMPERIAL WAR CABINET, 29.

Minutes of a Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held in London, at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, August 2, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present :

The PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord President of the Council.	The Right Hon. SIR ROBERT L. BORDEN, G.C.M.G., K.C., Prime Minister of Canada.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.	The Right Hon. W. M. HUGHES, Prime Minister of Australia.
The Right Hon. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.	The Right Hon. J. COOK, Minister of the Navy, Australia.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. W. F. MASSEY, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
The Right Hon. LORD R. CECIL, K.C., M.P., Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.	The Right Hon. SIR JOSEPH WARD, Bt., K.C.M.G., Minister of Finance, New Zealand.
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.	Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C., Minister for Defence, Union of South Africa.
The Right Hon. SIR ERIC GEDDES, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty.	The Right Hon. W. F. LLOYD, K.C., Prime Minister of Newfoundland.
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War.	The Right Hon. SIR S. P. SINHA, Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.

The following were also present :

Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.	The Right Hon. LORD NEWTON, Controller, Prisoners of War Department, Foreign Office (for Minute 10).
General SIR HENRY H. WILSON, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 9).	Lieutenant-General SIR H. E. BELFIELD, K.C.B., D.S.O. (for Minute 10).
Major-General F. H. SYKES, C.M.G., Chief of the Air Staff (for Minutes 1 to 9).	Mr. R. G. VANSITTART, M.V.O., Foreign Office (for Minute 10).
The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 10 and 11).	Captain H. K. KITSON, R.N., Admiralty (for Minute 10).

M^r H. C. M. Lambert C.B. Colonial Office

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., *Secretary*.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. STORR, *Assistant Secretary*.
Captain L. F. BURGIS, *Assistant Secretary*.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. S. AMERY, M.P., *Assistant Secretary*.

Transport of
American Troops.

1. THE Prime Minister informed the Imperial War Cabinet that he was communicating with M. Clemenceau to make it clear that we were unable to find more cargo-boats than we had already done for the American forces.

The Western Front

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that there was no material change in the situation. The Germans had bombed very heavily behind our lines two nights previously, dropping bombs on twenty towns, and more particularly on Dieppe. Beyond one or two bridges broken, not much damage had been done. We had retaliated the previous night with a raid carried out by forty-two machines, and we claimed to have destroyed seven German hangars and sixteen machines.

Other Theatres.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff mentioned that the retreat of the Italians in Albania, under the Austrian counter-attack, had uncovered the French flank and considerably annoyed the French. There were signs of the Czecho-Slovaks in Siberia extending their influence southwards towards Turkestan. In the Persian-Caspian region General Wilson reported that half a battalion of North Staffordshires were due at Enzeli, and should reach Baku on the 3rd or 4th, if shipping was ready for them.

In East Africa it looked as if Von Lettow, who was busy replenishing his troops from the Portuguese posts within his reach, was trying to break back northwards. It would be very inconvenient if he succeeded in his intention.

Mr. Long asked if the Chief of the Imperial General Staff was thoroughly satisfied in the conduct and progress of the campaign in German East Africa.

In this connection, General Smuts pointed out that one of the chief difficulties was the assistance afforded, by the natives to the Germans, owing to their hatred of the Portuguese.

Loss of an Airship.

4. The First Sea Lord reported that the airship C 25, which had been sent out after a submarine, had not returned, and was probably lost.

Bombing of Bruges.

5. The First Sea Lord reported that there had been considerable bombing activity against Bruges Dock and Zeebrugge. We claimed to have hit a submarine lying off Zeebrugge mole.

Air Activity.

6. The Chief of the Royal Air Staff stated that there had been very heavy fighting in the air on the Western front, exclusive of Fifth Group and the Independent Force, during the last few days, resulting in our bringing down or destroying 71 German machines to a loss of 12 on our side. The bombing on both sides, to which the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had already referred, had been heavy. On an average we dropped, at a moderate estimate, about three tons of bombs to their one. Considering the bad weather, the operations of the Independent Force against Saarbrücken, Stuttgart, and Mannheim had been very successful. On the 31st July the station and factories at Saarbrücken were subjected to two attacks. The first formation was heavily attacked by a large number of scouts, and in the bitter fighting which ensued lost four machines. The remainder of the formation proceeded to Saarbrücken and carried out its work. On the way back it was again very heavily attacked, and lost three machines. One hostile machine was driven down. The total number of scouts encountered is estimated at 40, which represents a serious withdrawal of force

from the enemy's front line. In view of the odds against them he considered that the fact that our machines actually executed their task against Saarbrücken was most creditable.

The second attack on Saarbrücken delivered the same day was completely successful. Bursts were observed among the factories. Our machines were again heavily attacked by hostile scouts, but all returned safely.

A raid against Treves on the 1st August had also brought out the fact that a large hostile air formation had been concentrated for the defence of that city. A raid against Cologne on the same day had been prevented by thick clouds, and our machines had dropped their bombs on Duren instead. In Italy we had, between the 28th July and the 1st August, brought down 14 enemy machines without any loss to ourselves.

The Petroleum Situation.

7. The Secretary mentioned that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had suggested that Admiral Slade's Paper on the Petroleum Situation (Paper G.T.-~~5267~~) should be referred to the Petroleum Committee. 5267

The Prime Minister stated that this paper bore very vitally on the discussions of the Committee of Prime Ministers.

Mr. Long's suggestion was agreed to.

The Dominions and Foreign Policy : Arbitration Treaty with Brazil.

8. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs asked for the authorisation of the Imperial War Cabinet to his proceeding with an Arbitration Treaty with Brazil, which was under discussion. It was a type of treaty which the British Government were always ready to make with any country, and in the ordinary course he would have dealt with it as a matter of Foreign Office routine and not referred it to the War Cabinet. In view, however, of the definite recognition of the right of the Dominions to have a voice in the settlement of such questions, he thought it better to clear his conscience by bringing the matter before the Imperial War Cabinet for authorisation.

The Imperial War Cabinet authorised—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to proceed with the negotiations for the Arbitration Treaty with Brazil.

Recruitment in Abyssinia

9. The Imperial War Cabinet took note of the conclusions embodied in Joint Note No. 34 of the Military Representatives to the Supreme War Council adverse to the recruitment of troops in Abyssinia. and agreed with them.

Exchange of Prisoners of War.

10. With reference to Imperial War Cabinet 28, Minute 5, the Imperial War Cabinet had before them the Hague Agreement (Paper G.-291) and a Memorandum by the Admiralty regarding the exchange of submarine prisoners (Paper G.T.-5272), together with a Memorandum by Lord Newton on the same subject (Paper G.T.-5284).

The First Lord of the Admiralty said that the Admiralty viewed with the greatest apprehension the ratification of an Agreement which included an exchange of submarine prisoners. The War Cabinet had approved the policy that submarine prisoners should not be included (War Cabinet 419, Minute 10 (a)), and at a later date this decision was altered to the effect that no negotiations were to take place with regard to submarine prisoners without specific reference to the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 427, Minute 5). These were the instructions to the British delegates. With regard to the return of Captain Kitson with Sir George Cave to this country, Sir Eric Geddes said that the Admiralty were never consulted with

regard to the appointment of the Naval Attaché at the Hague to take Captain Kitson's place, and he resented the statement in Lord Newton's Memorandum that Captain Kitson and the Naval Attaché acted as assistant delegates. The War Cabinet decided that the Admiralty should not send a delegate to the Hague, but only a representative (War Cabinet 425, Minute 18). Apart from the risk that the German Admiralty would ignore the treaty and employ this *personnel* under assumed names or otherwise for combatant submarine duties, the First Lord said that if these twenty-four German submarine officers and forty-six petty officers were returned, it would give Germany the means of training submarine crews, which would undoubtedly result in a serious increase in our sinkings, and would wipe out the success of many months of anti-submarine warfare. Finally, he pointed out that if we gave way on the present occasion it would make it more difficult in any future negotiations of the same kind to resist German pressure.

Mr. Long asked if any copy of the original draft was in existence; if so, it should be produced in order to confirm our contention.

Sir George Cave said that the British delegates had refused to discuss the repatriation of submarine crews, and they were not pressed to do so by the Germans. In the draft agreement Sir George Cave had himself put in the paragraph relating to the exception of submarine crews. The draft was then considered by the Conference clause by clause, and the exception was not then objected to by the Germans. It was his impression that after he left The Hague the British draft was put on one side and the Conference worked on the German draft.

It was pointed out that when the omission had been noted the Dutch neutral chairman had been seized with the validity of our claim, and when visiting Berlin immediately after the Conference had made representations on the matter. The draft did exist and could be produced.

Lord Robert Cecil said that the Committee appointed by the Imperial War Cabinet to investigate the subject of retaliation (Imperial War Cabinet 28, Minute 7) had already met. During their deliberations they had discovered that, in Section 3 of Annex A to the final protocol of the Agreement, it was stated that the British delegates had taken exception to children under the age of 15, born in the British Empire of German parents, being returned to Germany. The Germans had wished that children under the age of 15 should be repatriated with their parents, and, if over 15 years of age, the children themselves should decide whether they wished to be repatriated or not. This seemed to Lord Robert Cecil a most reasonable request, and he thought that, if we could give way to the Germans on this point, they might agree to the reinsertion of the clause in the agreement relating to submarine officers.

Sir George Cave said that he did not know what numbers this concession would involve, and in any case the children were legally British subjects, and had received a British education; if boys of 16 and 17 were sent to Germany they might be of use to Germany in the war. It was generally agreed by the Imperial War Cabinet that children under the age of 15 ought to be allowed to return to Germany with their parents, and also all girls over the age of 15. The release of boys over 15 years of age was, however, a different matter.

Lord Curzon pointed out that by making this concession we were paying the Germans a price for keeping to their agreement. It had been an accident that the signatures of the delegates were affixed to the wrong draft.

Sir Robert Borden was of opinion that the British delegates should not have refused to permit children below the age of 15 to go with their parents. Modification of the Agreement in that respect could hardly be regarded as a concession.

Sir George Cave said that the Germans were asking for another concession with regard to their countrymen in China.

Mr. Balfour protested strongly against any idea of making any concession on the question of the Germans in China in order to induce the Germans to agree to the reinsertion of the clause relating to submarine prisoners.

Some discussion followed as to who was present when the Agreement in its final form had been gone through with the Germans clause by clause. Lord Newton said this had been done by a Sub-Committee at which he was not present.

Sir Robert Borden said that there had been no clear statement of the circumstances which had led up to the unfortunate mistake. If we were to urge amendment on the German Government there must be a plain and logical statement of the facts, and it ought to be submitted to the Imperial War Cabinet. He asked Sir Eric Geddes whether the limiting factor of German submarine activity was men or construction, and he was told that beyond question it was men.

Lord Robert Cecil said that the recent reply of the German Government, that they could only sign the Agreement as it stood at present, was only their reply to a memorandum of the delegates pointing out the omission of the submarine clause. As yet no reply had been received to the representations made by the British Government on the subject.

The Prime Minister said that the omission of this clause showed an extraordinary piece of carelessness, which had resulted in placing the Government in a position of great difficulty.

Mr. Hughes stated that, with regard to Lord Robert Cecil's proposal relating to the return of German children under the age of 15, he thought that this was the rational and proper thing to do, and as the champions of right we should not emphasize too much the fact that this was a concession on our part. We should never convince the man in the street that to separate a child from its parents, whether legal or not, was the humane thing to do. He was, however, against returning to Germany boys over 15 years of age.

The Imperial Cabinet decided—

- (a.) To ratify the text of The Hague Agreement, provided that it was corrected by the reinsertion of the clause providing for the exemption of German submarine prisoners.
- (b.) That we should state our willingness to reconsider the question of releasing a number of children born in the British Empire of German parents.
- (c.) That the representatives of the British Government carrying out negotiations on this point should be instructed that we would return to Germany all girls and boys born in the British Empire of German parents up to the age of 15, and if neither parent objected would return all girls over that age who were willing to go, but that we should refuse to repatriate boys over 15 years of age.
- (d.) That Sir George Cave should prepare a statement detailing all proofs, enduces, and arguments which could be adduced to prove that the exemption of submarine prisoners was agreed, and that the omission was merely a drafting or printer's error.

Norwegian Territorial Waters.

11. The First Lord of the Admiralty informed the Imperial War Cabinet that our submarine patrols had secured definite ocular evidence of the fact that German submarines had made use of Norwegian territorial waters in order to get round our minefields. When those minefields were first laid there was some discussion as to whether Norway should be asked to join in laying the minefield in her territorial waters, or whether we should lay it right up to the shore, without regard for Norwegian neutrality. In the end it had

been decided that we should start the minefield at the edge of Norwegian territorial waters, and rely on Norway insisting effectively on her neutrality being respected. In view of the evidence which we had now secured, he thought Norway should be definitely asked whether she would immediately put a stop to the passage of submarines through her waters or leave us to do it. If she was willing to take the former course, we could supply her with the necessary mines. He reminded the Imperial War Cabinet that both Sweden and Norway had laid minefields in their territorial waters at the instance of Germany, in order to prevent our submarines getting into the Baltic through the Kogrund Channel. He considered a week sufficient time to give Norway to come to a decision in the matter. We could lay the mines ourselves in 48 hours.

The First Sea Lord reminded the Imperial War Cabinet that Norway had already issued a decree against the use of her territorial waters by submarines. He was inclined to think the Norwegians would prefer us to carry out the work of completing the minefield.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

- (a.) It was essential that the passage of submarines in territorial waters be stopped, and approved steps being taken to effect this.
- (b.) The First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should consult as to the best way of dealing with the Norwegian Government in the matter.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
August 2, 1918.

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